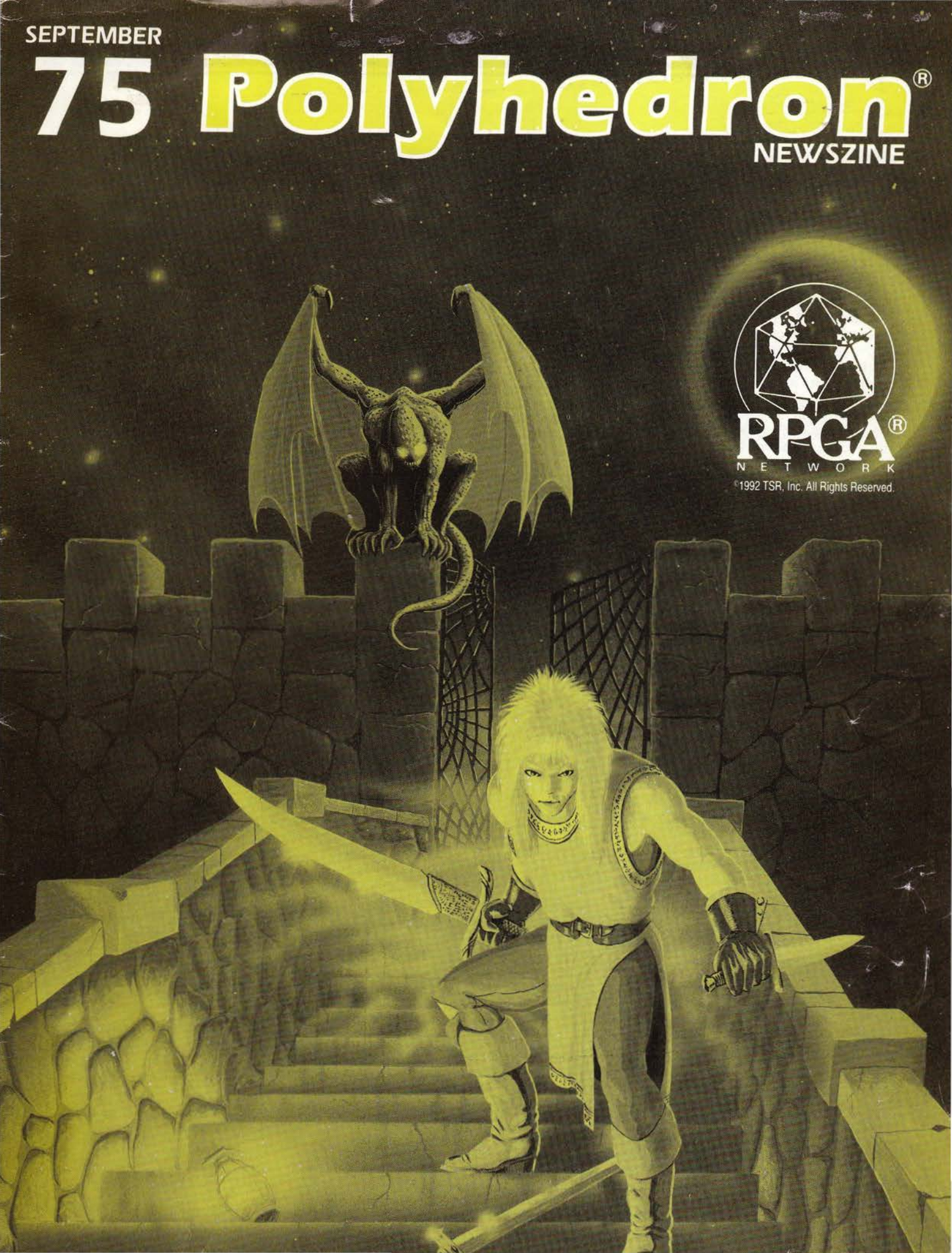
SEPTEMBER

75 Polyhedron®

NEWSZINE



RPGA® NETWORK

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Good Con Goer

Get The Most Out Of Conventions

by Alan Grimes

The Newszine has published many excellent articles on how to organize and put on a good convention. In addition, there have been features about how to prepare and run tournament scenarios. All of this has been prudent advice for people involved with running a convention. But a handful of unruly individuals can make all the convention volunteers' efforts—and the Network's advice—for naught.

The Guests of Honor have arrived, the convention rooms are set up, a myriad of brochures are waiting on the registration desk, the dealers have been contacted and are going to exhibit, the bills have been paid, the Convention Committee is getting to bed early, and the day of the convention comes sunny and warm. Everything seems to be perfect as far as organization goes.

You open the door to the registration room, all smiles and joy and proud of your efforts, and the first attendee walks in.

He takes one look at the outer space motif that you have decorated the room in, and says, "That sucks! You guys should have at least done a decent job of this! Where's my registration book? I want to get out of this event. What do you mean, I'll have to wait until 9 a.m. to cancel? I'm the first one here, so I should get to do what I want now!"

Attendees with bad attitudes can spoil the best-laid plans at a convention. Rude, obnoxious, and otherwise unacceptable behavior is one of the major trials that convention staff members must face from their "customers."

However, you, as a convention attendee, can make life easier for workers and volunteers with a little effort.

1 Take the initiative! This doesn't mean to roll weighted dice in AD&D® games. Instead, try to solve problems on your own before going to a member of the convention staff. Sure, they are there to help you if you have a problem, but I can assure you that they aren't going to be thrilled when you interrupt their Guest of Honor briefing to ask where the bathrooms are. Similarly, try to find your gaming events on your own before running to someone else. Obviously, if you're at a convention on your own, your mother thinks that you can take care of yourself, so don't adopt a convention staff member as a foster parent.

2 Be courteous. I know, I know, you're sick and tired of hearing this adage everywhere you go, but it really is a good idea. People will treat you better in return.

3 Be on time! This is one of those little pet peeves that many GMs have. It's really annoying to have just gone through the introduction to an adventure and have a player waltz in, sit down, and expect the GM to repeat it just for him. Guests of Honor experience a similar dislike of having someone walk in late during their reading or presentation. And by the way—it is NEVER appropriate to loudly crunch potato chips during a presentation or game. Keep in mind, too, that stopping just outside the event area and setting your watch back to make it look like you arrived on time is equally outre.

4 Attend the events for which you sign up to participate. Nothing is more annoying for other attendees than to be turned down for an event because it is full—and then to walk by and see that one-third of the seats are empty. Keep in mind that many conventions place restrictions on the number of individuals that certain events can hold. So if you sign up for an event and then decide that you don't want to attend it, be sure to let the convention staff know. Likewise, if you are opting out of one of your gaming events, make sure the GM knows that you won't be there. It is unwise to ask a friend to deliver the message—assume that he'll forget or will be too busy, because that's generally the case!

5 Be kind to the Guests of Honor. Many convention staff members get complaints from their Guests of Honor about people who are rude or otherwise bothersome to them. The Guests of Honor generally follow up this complaint by a short and blunt statement that they will not be returning to that convention. I know of several authors, artists, and other figureheads who refuse to attend conventions for that very reason. After all, wouldn't you get a little irritated if someone came up to you and said, "I really hate what you do for a living." Most guests are willing to accept constructive criticism (I know, it's a cliche, but it's true), so long as it is given in a polite manner. A suggestion to an author that perhaps he used too much violence in his latest work is much more in line than a loud protestation that the author is a bloodthirsty brute who should be drawn and quartered.

6 Finally, have some respect. Rodney Dangerfield could be considered the patron of convention staff members, GMs, and Guests of Honor. Convention staff members and volunteers put in weeks of time and hard work to get the convention organized, set-up, and running. GMs spend days preparing scenarios, playtesting them, and organizing for running their event. Guests of Honor have fanatically busy schedules, not only having to travel about the country for conventions and events, but also trying to make a living. All of this work can be devastated by only one attendee with the wrong attitude. Try and respect everyone at a convention.

Keeping these things in mind will save everyone a lot of misery and effort. Remember that if YOU detract from the convention atmosphere by breaking one or more of these tips, you aren't just spoiling things for the people around you, you are hurting the convention as a whole. So, at the end of each convention, if you decide that you didn't like what went on, think back to see if part of that is your fault, and don't shove all the blame on the convention staff. ❑

About the Cover

Artist Ray VanTilburg deftly illustrates a scene from Ravens Bluff, the Network's city in the FORGOTTEN REALMS® campaign setting. This scene also appears on this year's Living City T-shirts.

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Polyhedron® NEWSZINE

Volume 12, Number 8
Issue #75, September, 1992

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1975 was a very good year, but not necessarily for movies. Our reviewer delves into the past to find favorites that match our issue number.

Notes From HQ

Caveat Emptor And Lord Blacktree

Putting on a happy face. Members Advisory Committee spokesmen Don Bingle and Randall Lemon represented the Network on the Milwaukee segment of the Children's Miracle Network Telethon on May 31st. (That's Don going through makeup.)

Lord Charles Frederik Laverne Blacktree IV is sweating. He's afraid Lord Mayor Charles Oliver O'Kane might appoint someone else as Lord Speaker of the Advisory Council.

You see, Lord Blacktree is Lord Speaker of the Advisory Council, and his term is up in January of the coming year.

Will Lord Blacktree retain his title?

Members of the Advisory Council hope **not.** They want the fop replaced.

Of course, the replacement must be a character who has the city's best interests at heart, a character who is diplomatic and an upstanding resident of Ravens Bluff, a character who will be played in the WINTER FANTASY™ convention's Living City tournament.

If you plan to attend the WINTER FANTASY convention and play in the Living City tournament, you might want your character to campaign for the appointment of Lord Speaker of the Advisory Council. It is a two-year appointment that carries prestige, honor, and an increase in your character's gold pieces.

Other positions could become available at conventions elsewhere. So if you can't make it to the WINTER FANTASY Convention, don't feel left out! We'd like to know at what other conventions you would like to have Living City activities, and what type of things you'd like to see.

How To Campaign For Lord Speaker

1. Submit a **one page** letter on why your character should have the position of Lord Speaker. This can be in the form of a campaign speech, a list of accomplishments, or a job application. Be clever and creative. Your name and membership number must appear on the upper right hand corner of the page. Put your character's name and level on the upper left. **Deadline:** November 30.

2. Enter the Living City tournament at the WINTER FANTASY convention. Winter Fantasy will be Jan. 8-10 at MECCA in Milwaukee. See our insert for more information.

3. Demonstrate your knowledge of the Living City. (We're not going to tell you how this will be done. We're saving it for the convention.)

The character who scores the highest will have the Advisory Council's support for the Lord Speaker position. Of course, there's still Lord Blacktree to worry about.

Classified Advertisements

For many years the RPGA™ Network has been running classified ads as a courtesy to our members. And we have had no problem—until one instance recently.

So, I want to take a couple of moments to caution you about classified advertisements that offer goods for sale. This applies to advertisements you find in **any** magazine.

Never send cash if you are ordering something through the mail.

If you send a check, make sure you have a carbon or keep the canceled check when it is returned from the bank. The latter is proof that your check was cashed.

If you send a money order, keep the stub receipt from the money order. This is your only way to get your money back if your money order is lost in the mail.

Do not throw away the advertisement after you have ordered materials. If you don't keep the advertisement, it will make it difficult to remember who to contact if your order is not fulfilled.

If your check or money order is cashed, and you do not receive your goods within a reasonable amount of time, contact the person you ordered from and notify him or her you have not received anything. Give the seller a few weeks to respond. If this effort proves futile, you have other avenues, such as the Better Business Bureau, which can provide you a wealth of advice. You can't take any legal action or work through the Better Business Bureau unless you have proof of your order.

The POLYHEDRON® Newszine and other magazines produced by TSR, Inc. are not liable for any failed performance of classified advertisers.

As I stated before, the vast majority of people who offer goods through classified advertisements are honest folks. I know, because I've ordered from several. I don't want to discourage you from ordering from classified advertisers, as you can get some really good deals and find some old, out-of-print materials. I just want you to cover your bases.

Special Thanks

This issue Network thanks go out to Kevin and Carrie Rau of Milwaukee, WI. This husband-wife team has been helping us at the WINTER FANTASY convention, the GEN CON® Game Fair, and has been assisting the Newszine nearly every month. They type in the articles we accept that do not come with computer disks. Carrie always smiles when we hand her a stack of manuscripts. We appreciate their time and effort.

Take Care,

Jean ❑

Letters

Judging Judges

The letters and comments on "Best GM" awards in issue #71 prodded me to write and tell the reasons behind why most Australian conventions don't offer such awards anymore.

As you stated, for RPGA™ Network events in Australia, each time a person judges a round, their name is put in a hat. Some non-Network events do this as well. At the award ceremonies, one or more names are drawn from the hat, and prizes are awarded. Getting one entry per round judged encourages people to judge more rounds—and not to pull out of later rounds so as not to have a detrimental effect on their high scores from early rounds.

Some non-Network groups still give a Best GM award, but it leads to some lopsided judging at times. Australian conventions are mostly team oriented, and all players play all rounds of a tournament. Prizes are generally awarded for team efforts, and the better GMs often hand pick the teams they want to judge—sort of like Masters and Grand Masters events, with the same resultant high scores all around. Also, if the players are scoring the judge, it is not unheard of for deals to be struck so that teams get a good score in return for a good score to the judge. Of course, not everyone does this, just as not everyone would pull out of judging later rounds to protect a high score. But, if even one person or group abuses the system, that is one too many.

Most events that give Best GM awards get the players to put their GM score sheets in a sealed envelope, so the GM can't read them. Of course, this makes more work for coordinators. Generally the author(s) can't win. After all, you'd expect them to have the best module knowledge, so they can concentrate on other aspects of GMing.

On the comment made by the WINTER FANTASY™ convention winner about not doing a Best GM award again, the first time we had a Best GM award here, Robert McLean won the prize and commented afterward that he felt he didn't deserve it, as he'd only judged a few rounds. On reflection, he was probably right, but he did have the highest average score. Not learning from that lesson, we tried it twice more with embarrassing results. I won both times, and the object of the exercise was to encourage more people to GM, not boost my game library. No, I didn't take the prizes, they went to the second place GM, but is the whole thing really fair?

Having said all that, I feel it was unfair that players got to compete for the trip to European GEN CON® Game Fair, but you disqualified yourself if you judged the Feature or the Benefit. I believe that it would have been better to conduct a draw of every person who played or judged the Benefit, with judges getting one entry for every time they judged the event. That way, it encourages both judges and more players for the Benefit. At least this year's prizes of lots of TSR product, lots of SSI product, or Ral Partha miniatures gives a chance to win something—if that's what you're after. It would still be better to do a random draw.

To encourage GMs in Australia, apart from random draws, many conventions offer all GMs incentives by way of free drinks delivered during the session (hint, the Network could do this at the Game Fair), free limited edition coffee mugs, or free GM only T-shirts. There are lots of other ways to encourage GMs—you don't need a Best GM prize.

Wes Nicholson
Network Branch Manager
South Pacific

Thanks for your input, Wes. We agree that GM awards based on scores gives rise to all kinds of headaches. However, we admit that GMs need to be recognized in other ways. Random drawings are nice—if you can do them. For example, in the United States, there are laws about drawings, as some constitute lotteries and sweepstakes—and therefore might have to be publicized and available to the general public. At the GEN CON® Game Fair we thank our GMs by giving them free admission to the convention (if they run at least three rounds) and a $2 gift certificate per round run. Since the regular pre-registration fee to the convention is $35, we consider the package a good deal. Further, by running one or two tournaments and playing in others, GMs have an opportunity at some of the prizes offered to players at the Game Fair. At the WINTER FANTASY convention we offer GMs reduced admission. Other conventions thank GMs in a variety of ways.

I have been a member of the RPGA Network for well over a year now, and I have found it to be everything that I was told it would be. The POLYHEDRON® Newszine entertains me for quite some time, and it keeps me well informed about the Network, if not in touch with it. As far as the conventions are concerned, I cannot say enough. The games are all well designed and hopefully played (including

Continued on page 30

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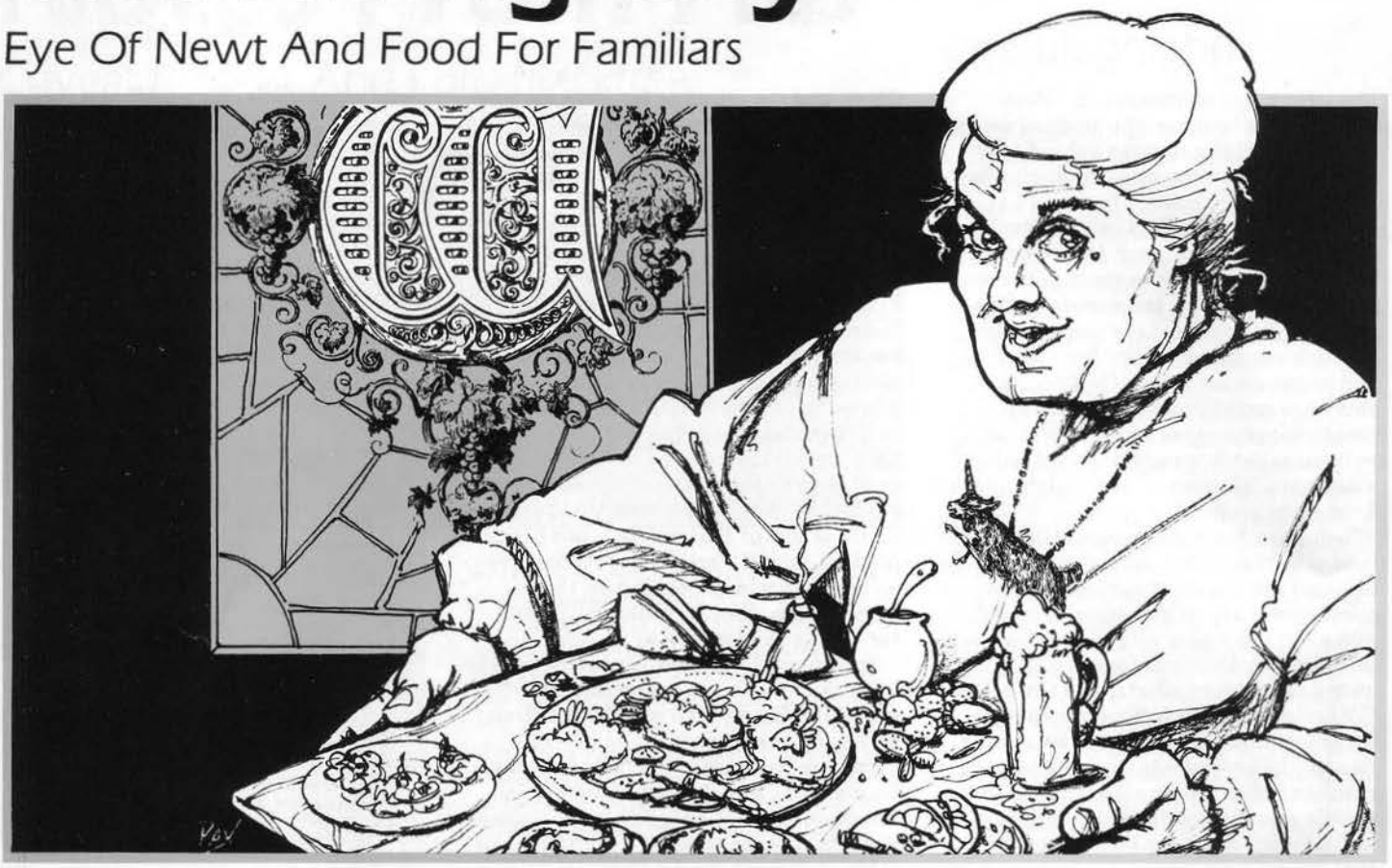
The Living City

Eye Of Newt And Food For Familiars



by Carla Hollar & Nicky Rea

Morigan's Complete Components and The Kettle of Many Things are neighboring shops run by Mijel and Jandra Morigan, husband and wife ex-adventurers. The pair opened businesses in adjoining buildings about 15 years ago. The shops share a common wall below, but join together above to provide spacious living quarters for the Morigans and their daughter, Jelima.

Morigan's Complete Components

The small stone building boasts a large glass window and an intricately painted sign shaped like a stylized open spellbook with "Morigan's Complete Components" lettered in gold leaf across the "pages." Displayed in the window are clay pots with fresh herbs, plants and flowers, and glass aquariums and terrariums filled with herring, grasshoppers, crickets, spiders, non-poisonous snakes and other tiny creatures.

To most customers, the shop seems overly neat. The store is fitted with floor-to-ceiling shelves and cabinets of solid polished oak. The shelves' contents are aligned and centered, and the jars, bowls, boxes and other containers are clean and alphabetically organized. Components within the containers are individually packaged in the correct amount for each spellcasting. Stepstools are conveniently located along the walls, as are small lanterns with *continual light* spells cast on them.

The counter contains a set of scales and weights, scoops, measuring spoons and cups, funnels, a magnifying lens, jewelers' loupe, packaging materials, string, wax, and a large book which lists the names and components necessary for casting every spell Mijel knows—and many which he has only heard about. A smaller book holds information about clerical components, which Mijel also stocks.

The cashbox is kept on a shelf under the counter, but never has more than 30 gp worth of coins in it. A blue and white striped curtain behind the counter hides the entrance to Mijel's workroom.

The workroom is as neat and orderly as the shop. Racks of dried herbs hang from hooks, jars filled with raw materials line long counters, and mortars and pestles hang in racks along the back wall. Wrapping materials, small cloth sacks, and tiny stoppered pots are stored in shelves beneath the counters.

Behind a bunch of dried lavender on the back wall is a secret compartment in which Mijel stores his most valuable components, including certain ichors, powdered gemstones, and a very few specially constructed items such as a jade circlet worth 5,000 gp. A *magic mouth* spell has been cast on the door of the compartment, and if anyone save Mijel opens it the *mouth* repeats, "Now you've done it. Mijel! There's a thief in here!"

Mijel keeps a comfortable chair and a solid-looking, leather-covered footstool in his workroom. The footstool's inner core is steel, making it very heavy. A concealed catch on the side of the stool opens to reveal the steel box within. Mijel hides his spellbooks here. Before closing shop for the night, Mijel always casts *alarm* on the footstool. A small hole in the ceiling of the workroom allows the sound to reach Mijel in his bedroom above. Lighting in the workroom is provided by two glass *continual light* globes.

Behind a swinging shelf in the east wall is a secret door which leads into The Kettle of Many Things.

At night, the door to the components shop is *wizard locked* and has a string of bells attached to the inside handle. If someone manages to bypass the magical protection, the bells alert Mijel that he has an uninvited customer. Further, bells are attached to the secret door that leads into The Kettle.

The Kettle of Many Things

The Kettle of Many Things, a specialty restaurant catering to wizards and their familiars, is located in a large stone and wood building which shares the common wall with Morigan's Complete Components. Two bay windows in front and three large windows along one side are filled with stained glass depicting kettles, pots, vegetables, fruits, and some of the more common animals found as mages' familiars. These provide a colorful, relaxing illumination throughout the restaurant and are supplemented by soft candlelight and dimly lit colored glass globes.

The front door of the restaurant opens to reveal a waiting area outfitted with a pair of fanciful wooden cloak "trees" and a row of comfortable chairs. Through an archway is the main dining area, which holds several small, square tables and chairs. There are two private dining booths with round tables and seating for eight. The dining hall also has a rack for holding staves.

Several types of perches, boxes, and other feeding stations designed for making familiars comfortable are available.

The delicious smells of fresh-baked bread, enticing spices, and hearty aromas from Jandra's soup-of-the-day waft throughout the structure and escape into the street whenever the door is opened. A full array of cheeses, fruits, vegetables, and delicately spiced meats and pies are available, as well as several types of teas, fruit juices, light wines, and The Kettle's specialty—honey-spiced mead served hot or cold.

Jandra always makes sure her customers know that Mijel concocted the mead. All meals cater to delicate constitutions, and a special menu is available for wizards' familiars.

Jandra's daughter, Jelima, is the hostess and waitress (occasionally helped by Jandra when business is particularly brisk). The girl's prettiness, good nature, and teasings have caused many a customer to leave an overgenerous tip. Jandra sometimes hires day labor to help with the serving duties, and the growing popularity of The Kettle has led her to seriously consider hiring another full-time waitress.

The kitchen lies behind double doors at the back of the dining area; it is often a maelstrom of chaos. Every counter is littered with chopped vegetables, ladles, bowls, platters, bread pans, pots of herb butter, cheese wedges, carving knives and pitchers of various liquids. Despite the disorganization, everything is kept clean and fresh. Jandra moves like a whirlwind through it all, chopping vegetables, slicing bread, stirring soup, arranging platters, and seeming to be in several places at once. She thrives on the bustle and chaos. She was completely lost the one time Jelima rearranged the kitchen for efficiency.

The only spot of calm in the kitchen is a large wicker basket in an alcove, which is filled to overflowing with an immense white cat. This is Persil, Mijel's familiar, who is very pleased to have been "banished" to the one place in all the Realms where his culinary desires can be instantly satisfied. Beyond his basket, at the back of the alcove, is a false spice shelf which swings forward to reveal a secret door to Mijel's shop. Persil has learned how to pry it open, but has not yet had any reason to venture into the component shop; he is far more interested in the food in the kitchen.

Aside from a storage area, the kitchen has two large firepits and a bread oven, washbasins for food preparation and for dishes, cabinets for cups, platters and utensils, and a back door which opens to a hallway. The hallway has a stout wooden door which leads outside and a set of stairs which lead up to the living quarters above. At night, both the front and rear outer doors are securely locked.

Mijel Morigan

10th Level Male Human Wizard

STR:	8
INT:	18
WIS:	15
DEX:	12
CON:	7
CHA:	11

AC Normal: 3
AC Rear: 3
Hit Points: 29
Alignment: Lawful Good
Languages: Common, Elvish, Dwarvish, Halfling
Age: 47
Height: 5'9"
Weight: 137 lbs.
Hair/Eyes: Silvered Brown/Blue

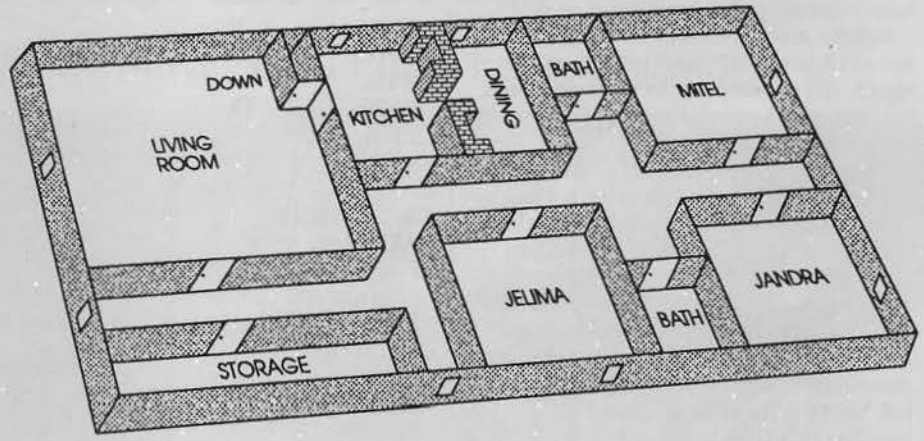
Weapon Proficiencies: Dart, staff
Nonweapon Proficiencies: Ancient history (magic) (17), appraisal (spell components) (18), artistic ability (calligraphy) (15), brewing (18), herbalism (16), reading/writing (20), spellcraft (16)
Magic Items: *Bracers of defense AC 3, periapt of proof against poison +3, girdle of many pouches* (pouch #64 contains an itemized list of all the items kept in the girdle)
Spells/day: 4 4 3 2 2

Spell Books:
Level One: *Alarm, cantrip, chill touch, comprehend languages, conjure spell component*, detect magic, find familiar, magic missile, mending, metamorphose liquids*, protection from evil, read magic, sleep, unseen servant;* Level Two: *Continual light, detect invisibility, glitterdust, invisibility, knock, know alignment, levitate, locate object, magic mouth, wizard lock;* Level Three: *Alamir's fundamental breakdown*, dispel magic, fly, hold person, slow, spectral force, suggestion, tongues, wraithform;* Level Four: *Charm monster, dimension door, emotion, improved invisibility, minor creation, minor globe of invulnerability, plant growth, stoneskin;* Level Five: *Airy water, hold monster, Khazid's procurement*, major creation, telekinesis, teleport*

* indicates spells from the *Tome of Magic.*

Slight and unassuming, Mijel dresses neatly in a plain, clean tunic and trousers. He wears a leather apron over them, and pulls his graying brown hair back into a tidy ponytail. He wears

The Kettle of Many Things



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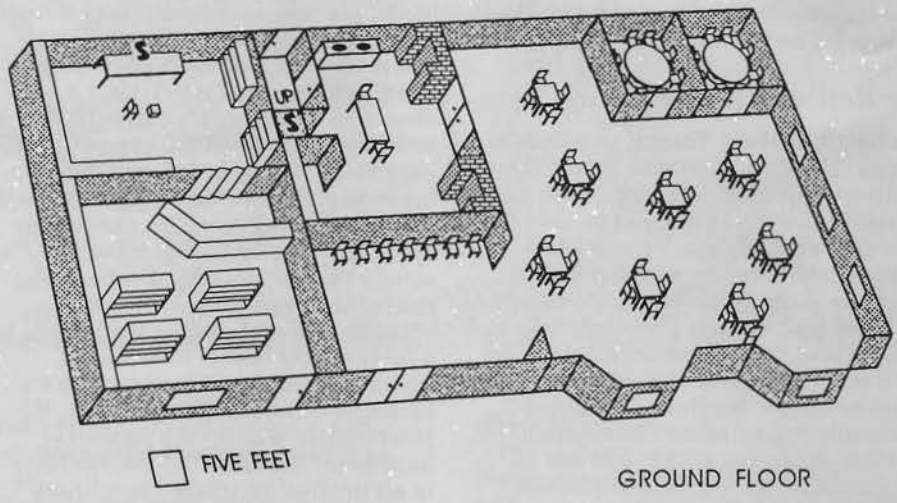


FIVE FEET

GROUND FLOOR

Morigan's Complete Components

sandals when it is warm, and boots when it isn't. Mijel seems so nondescript and so much the fussy clerk that most people never realize he is a highly competent mage.

Mijel is a man driven by the need for neatness and perfection, and he is meticulous and precise in everything he does. Every component in his shop has been weighed, catalogued, priced and placed on display with his own hands. Though he is pleasant to his customers, he becomes annoyed with browsers who disturb the order of his shelves or who carelessly spill things in his shop. He even "banished" his familiar, a white cat named Persil, to Jandra's restaurant after Persil ate his whole supply of herring.

Once a year Mijel brews his own honey-spiced mead, which has become a favorite at The Kettle. Those who compliment him on it occasionally find an extra packet or two of less expensive components tucked away in their order.

Mijel is always interested in finding new and unusual spells and components to add to his stock. Those who have such to offer, and who are willing to demonstrate the spell and its components, will be paid a "finder's fee" to allow Mijel to add the name of the spell and components to his book. He is also willing to pay adventurers who bring him some of the more exotic components, such as giant octopus tentacles. Mijel likes to hear all about how the adventurers acquired the items.

Though it was often disorderly and uncomfortable, Mijel misses the old days when he and his wife Jandra campaigned together—before his delicate health forced him to go into retirement. Though successful as adventurers, he and Jandra often disagreed, and upon their retirement, Mijel realized that Jandra's lack of organization would make it impossible for them to work together. He heartily encouraged her to set up her own business next door. Their pretty daughter Jelima currently works at The Kettle, but Mijel has decided she should stop flirting and begin her training in magecraft very soon.

Jandra Morigan

10th Level Female Human Ranger

STR:	13
INT:	15
WIS:	14
DEX:	17
CON:	16
CHA:	13

AC Normal: 7
AC Rear: 10
Hit Points: 68
Alignment: Chaotic Good
Languages: Common, Elvish, Orcish
Age: 43
Height: 5′5″
Weight: 138 lbs.
Hair/Eyes: Graying Blond/Blue

Weapon Proficiencies: Long sword, short sword, long bow, dagger, staff
Nonweapon Proficiencies: Animal handling (13), animal lore (15), cooking (17), hunting (13), reading/writing (17), swimming (13), tracking (17)
Magic Items: *Long sword +2*
Spells/day: 21
Spheres: Animal and plant. Jandra usually memorizes *Animal friendship, locate animals or plants,* and *speak with animals.* **Special Enemy:** Orcs

Jandra Morigan is a bundle of bustling energy. A compact, comfortable looking woman, she usually wears a gray or blue tunic and pants. Her unicorn pendant (a symbol of Mielikki) is her only jewelry, and though she tries to confine her hair in a neat bun, several unruly curls escape early in the day. Her friendly smile is so much a part of her, she'd look undressed without it.

Jandra runs The Kettle of Many Things with a firm hand and a generous heart. She delights in creating new dishes and teases her regular customers, claiming she has just made some "newt-tail soup" or "beholder broth" from components in her husband's shop. Her delicate touch with food makes it easy on the stomach and delicious—without being too highly spiced. Any leftovers at the end of the day are distributed to the city's poor.

Jandra loves animals and wanted to create a special haven where mages and their familiars would feel comfortable. Whenever someone new comes in with a familiar or animal companion, Jandra personally sees to it that the "friend" receives a special treat and suggests a look at the "companion's menu." When she has time, she will cast a *speak with animals* and try to make a new friend. It is not unusual for regular customer familiars entering the restaurant to head directly to the back to search for her.

Though Jandra loves Mijel and retired from adventuring when his health became too delicate, his need for order and perfection made the thought of owning a business together impossible. As a concession to him, she helps keep the family room, bathing area and his bedroom spotlessly clean and free of excess. She indulges herself by letting her own bedroom remain comfortably cluttered. She has made sure that Persil has a fluffy pillow in a chair reserved just for him in the family room. Further, she has barred Mijel from approaching Jelima's room ever since he took a look one day at her piles of colorful clothes, scarves, shoes, and the shelves cluttered with perfumes, powders, mirrors, ribbons and combs—he almost fainted.

Jandra wants Jelima to be independent and make her own decisions. However, Jandra is a little concerned about Jelima's tendency to flirt with the better-looking customers.

Jelima Morigan

0 Level Female Human

STR:	9
INT:	16
WIS:	9
DEX:	15
CON:	12
CHA:	15

AC Normal: 7
AC Rear: 8
Hit Points: 4
Alignment: Neutral Good
Languages: Common, Elvish
Age: 14
Height: 5′
Weight: 95 lbs.
Hair/Eyes: Blond/Blue

Weapon Proficiencies: Dagger
Nonweapon Proficiencies: Reading/writing (18), swimming (9)
Magic Items: *Ring of protection +2* (a gift from Jandra)

Jelima Morigan is a delicate, petite, sunny blond with a mane of wild curls tied back in a ponytail. Her bright blue eyes are always animated, taking in everything. She likes to wear either long tunics with hose or gowns which reach her ankles, usually in blue, green or yellow. Her one concession to working at The Kettle is the apron which she wears when serving meals.

Jelima is the only child of Jandra and Mijel Morigan. She has been working in her mother's restaurant since she was age six, helping in the kitchen and cleaning off tables. She took over the brunt of the hostessing and waitressing from her mother about three years ago.

She is very independent, joking with the customers, stopping to admire a handsome young mage's robes or tweaking an elderly wizard's beard—and she enjoys their admiration in return. To females, she is polite and attentive, but much less likely to tease them unless she knows them well. She makes a point of learning the familiars' names and always speaks to them, too.

Jelima thinks her mother was foolish to give up her career, and she looks forward to setting out on her own adventures. She has become proficient with a dagger, and she wants her mother to teach her swordplay and tracking. Jelima plans to become a ranger, or at least a warrior, or maybe a scout—anything but a wizard! Though she likes most of The Kettle's customers, she doesn't want to be tied down to the long hours of study and the obsession with neatness and detail which are her experiences with magecraft.

Adventure Idea For Morigan's Complete Components

- Mijel hires the PCs to acquire some particularly rare or difficult to obtain components. He needs them within four days. The PCs are a day and a half away from Ravens Bluff when they discover Jelima has followed them to learn how to be an adventurer. Mijel and/or Jandra might guess where their daughter is and might blame the PCs for luring her away—or they might be grateful for Jelima's return.

Adventure Ideas For The Kettle

- A PC mage interests Jelima enough that she follows him on his next adventure.
- If the PCs need some extra money, some or all of them are hired as extra servers for The Kettle while a mages' convocation is in town. Two arch-rival wizards who are seated near one another become loud and disruptive, then start an arcane duel in the middle of the dining area. It is up to the PCs to stop the wizards (and whoever has taken up sides with the rivals). The town watchmen will take awhile to get there. ❑

The Everwinking Eye

Sagely Secrets Made Known

by Ed Greenwood

"Odds and ends? Boy, life is nothing but an endless succession of what ye might call odds and ends! So pay thee more heed to details!"

Elminster of Shadowdale,
said to Rhaummas Thavarr, Archmage of Impiltur (then Elminster's pupil)
Year of the Bright Star

Before the Old Mage leads us onward in our tour of the Dragonreach, we've a little more tidying up to do; as Elminster has so pointedly reminded us, odds and ends need to be taken care of. Accordingly, let's look at spellfire and some Realms corrections.

Spellfire was first depicted in my novel of the same name, and then expanded into AD&D® game rules in *FR7/ Hall of Heroes* and by Skip Williams (in a *Sage Advice* column in issue #159 of DRAGON® Magazine). Several DMs who use the Realms have asked specific questions about this rare ability, and after prolonged discussions with Elminster (who seems reluctant indeed to reveal the secrets of spellfire) here are some answers, in the form of:

Additional Spellfire Rules

The FR7 spellfire text shouldn't be interpreted as forcing a spellfire-wielding character to change class. Rather, in any given adventure, experience is gained in the character's class only if no spellfire powers are used. If any spellfire is wielded, all experience points gained in the adventure go instead to the character's "spellfire level" (which uses the wizard XP table), and individual experience awards for the character's primary class (see page 48 of the 2nd Edition *Dungeon Masters Guide*) are lost.

At the first level of spellfire ability (not primary character class level), absorption of magical energy (from spells of all sorts, breath weapons, gaze attacks, magic item discharges, and just about anything else) is involuntary: the character drains any magic with which he comes into contact, including useful magic and healing spells (only rest or non-magical healing can restore lost hit points to the character). Absorption is strictly voluntary at the second level of spellfire ability and above.

A character who exceeds his absorption limit (which is his Constitution score × 10) involuntarily releases one level of energy about every six seconds (10 times per round), suffering 1-6 hp of damage each time, until the moment his total energy falls back into the "10 × Constitution" category (see FR7, page 50).

At 1st level, this involuntary release is uncontrolled, and can harm friends and valued things nearby (within five feet).

At 2nd level and above, the agonized spellfire-wielder can urge the release in one general direction, provided the character is free to act. There is intense burning pain, such as that suffered by Shandril when destroying Rauglothgor's lair. The wielder must save vs. paralyzation at −2. If this save fails, a spellfire wielder of any level "leaks" energy as a 1st level spellfire wielder until the total falls back to a controllable number. If the save succeeds, the wielder can use the release as an attack, and can opt to release *all* or any part of the excess energy in a single burst; however, each excess level of energy still inflicts 1d6 points of damage on the spellfire wielder no matter how it is released.

A 2nd level wielder attacking with an involuntary, but controlled, energy release suffers a −3 "to hit" penalty. If there are multiple bolts released during the round, the wielder can attack multiple targets, roll for each target separately.

At 3rd level, the attack roll is made at a −1 penalty.

At 4th level, the attack roll is normal.

At 5th level and above, the attack is made at +1. It increases by +1 per spellfire-level thereafter.

Overloading a spellfire wielder invites a deadly counterattack. However, spellfire wielders seldom willingly overload themselves, save in very emotional, exceptional circumstances (such as avenging the death of a loved one), as the pain and risk are simply too great.

All spellfire attacks have line-of-sight range—the wielder can hit anything he can see—and does not suffer penalties for range, concealment, or cover.

In Realms campaigns, only the DM can decide if a character is going to manifest spellfire ability (which may occur at any time, triggered by contact with magic or a magically-powered or-using being). This ability is hereditary, but also crops up at random, at the will of the gods. It is a form of "wild magic" that usually foretells great upheavals. In Shandril's case, the upheaval was "The Time of Troubles."

Spellfire is very rare; while it is not true that only one spellfire-wielder can exist in Faerun at a time, known (revealed) spellfire talents attract a lot of unwanted attention (as Shandril unwittingly did) and are very few and far between. DMs should never add a PC spellfire wielder to a campaign without a lot of forethought; its presence can too easily be a "campaign wrecker" in the hands of skilled (or merely malicious) players. On the other hand, when a lower beginning-level character joins a mid- to high-level party, giving the newcomer spellfire can be a good way to prevent the fledgling PC from being ignored, ordered about, or forced to run a gauntlet of too-dangerous challenges.

Elminster's Errata

Into every project in life, here and in Faerun, it seems, a few errors creep. Be it the work of dark forces, or the gods' way of teaching mortals humility, or mere ill luck...mistakes there are. . . always.

Elminster, sharp-tongued old rogue that he is ("five hundred-odd winters will do that to ye," he told me rather testily), has noticed more than a few in published Realms products. He has not hesitated to tell us so. Spelling (except on maps) and grammatical errors we gloss over here, and some things (the overprinted interior map in *FR3/ Empires of the Sands*, for instance) are too far gone to save. But in a few cases one feels moved to follow his, ah, gentle suggestions to correct such errors—hence these words. One hopes future mistakes will be few (Tymora willing).

Item the First: Map Mix-ups. In the original printing of the Realms boxed set (and the first and only issue of the *Secrets of the Sages* newsletter), the world map of "the North" of Faerun shows a city south of The High Moor

which it names "Sombar." The correct name of this place, as the "close-up" maps in the boxed set correctly give it, and as Elminster acidly assures us the city's native inhabitants prefer it, is "Soubar." Let it stand thus corrected.

In like manner, the color maps of the Moonshae Isles in *FR2/Moonshae* and *FA1/Halls of the High King* misspell the land "Alaron" as "Alaorn." In the text of both, the name is given correctly—and in the maps included as frontispieces to the novels *Black Wizards* and *Darkwell*, the correct spelling, Alaron, appears. In like manner, "Westphal" on the main *FR2* map should be "Westphall," as it is throughout the text. The description of Kazgoroth in *FR2* incorrectly states that The Beast is an aspect of Malar—this should read "Bhaal." On the other hand, the character entry for Cyndre in *FR7/Hall of Heroes* gives The Beast correctly as Bhaal's avatar, but misspells its name as "Kazgaroth." The color map insert of *FRE1/Shadowdale* is missing its most important feature: Elminster's Tower, the place in Shadowdale that the PCs come seeking! Locate it just between the bottom corners of "Pool" and "Jhaele Silvermane's Farm." Leaping back to the Realms boxed set for a moment, specifically to the Shadowdale map therein (page 78 of the Cyclopedia), the alert reader will find a "Temple of Tyche," which should be changed to "Temple of Tymora." In *FR10/Old Empires*, the color map insert has the following errors: "Thamon" (in Threskel) should be "Thamor;" "Furgar" (right on the eastern edge of the map) should be "Fuirgar;" and "Aenlpar Forest" (in the bottom right-hand corner of the map) should be "Aerilpar Forest."

In *FR11/Dwarves Deep*, the subterranean dwarven settlement of "Rimmato" on the color foldout map insert (it's close to The Great Rift) should properly be "Rimmator."

Item the Second: The inside cover of *FR1/Waterdeep and the North* displays two errors: the omission of an overall map of the North (it can be found on the inside of the back page of the *Secrets of the Sages* newsletter), and a little problem of missing keys: Generic building floor plans are provided for the use of harried DMs (well, that's not what Elminster calls them, but let that pass). Unfortunately, the key to the letters on the plans was omitted. It follows here, with apologies. ("Hmmph," said Elminster. "Apologies, forsooth! As if one should *apologize* for giving another a chance to exercise the imagination! All the worlds I walk are sinking into a sorry state, indeed!")

C = Counter
D = Display Cubicle/Area/Case
E = Eating Area
EL = Elevator (rope & pulleys lift platform)
H = Hallway
K = Kitchen
L = Living Area
LB = Lobby, Entry Area
LO = Lounge Area
O = Office
P = Privy (water-jug flush)
PUP = Public Use (Access) Privy/Washroom
S = Store
SL = Sleeping Area
ST = Storage Area (e.g. closet)
SU = Study/Meeting Room/Library
T = Table
W = Warehouse Space
X = Possible Staircase, or staircase under or over the one shown on the plan (i.e. to a lower level), or a Trapdoor or Chandelier location

= Pillar, Shelving, Curtain

W = Pass-through window in a wall (e.g. from kitchen to an eating area)

Item The Third: In *FR11/Dwarves Deep*, at the bottom of the middle column of text on page 5, things get rather confusing. To make sense of it all, amend the printed text to read as follows:

> ...and durable alloy known as *adamantine.*
>
> **Adamantine:** This alloy, a stable metal in its own right, is found (very rarely) in nature: as hard, jet-black ferrous ore known as "adamantite," and occasionally....

Item The Fourth: On page 2 of module *H3/The Bloodstone Wars*, it is stated that Ed Greenwood "reminds us that the primary Assassin's Run is located in the great city of Waterdeep." Well, here's Ed Greenwood himself to tell you that he does no such thing!

As stated in the original appearance of the Assassin's Run "obstacle course" dungeon, in issue #64 of DRAGON® Magazine, the Run was created in Athkatla, a city of Amn (see page 9 of *FR3/Empires of the Sands*), to train members of the Shadow Thieves because that organization had been hounded *out* of Waterdeep.

The Run *can't* be in Waterdeep; it's the very city its builders had fled from—and they built it to work their revenge on the rulers of Waterdeep, and an eventual return to The City of Splendors.

Item the Fifth: In *FOR2/The Drow of the Underdark*, the *Soultheft* spell is missing its level—be it known henceforth that it's a 7th level priest spell, granted (thus far) only to priests of Vhaeraun.

In the same sourcebook, the original Rothe monster entry detailed three types of rothe: deep, surface, and "ghost." In the printed sourcebook, only the deep variety is described. To clear up confusion for those traveling the Realms I've included the "missing" sub-entries here:

Surface Rothe

Bigger than their subterranean cousins, so-called "high" or "surface" rothe have longer legs, and hence are faster runners and more nimble rock climbers (move 12). They have heavier coats and their pelts are always suitable for use as clothing.

Large herds of rothe roam near Mt. Ghaethluntar and the glaciers east and north of it (in the Moonsea North), and in the snowy wastes north of the Ice Mountains (in the Sword Coast North). When attacks from gnoll, flind, and orc bands grow too fierce, the rothe herds tend to move out onto the frozen, icy dunes of Anauroch (The Great Desert), drinking water melted with the heat of their muzzles. They eat windblown lichens and iceflowers. Iceflowers are harmless white plants of the arctic areas of Faerun; they resemble sunflowers growing flat on the ground, with long, waxy dark green creeping arms and leaves.

The presence of frozen ponds and sunny ridges cloaked with lichens and groundpines make the verges of Anauroch just north of ruined Ascore particularly hospitable to ranging rothe. In the wide-open dunes, rothe can freely wheel to scatter or charge, and few ground-based foes can stand against them.

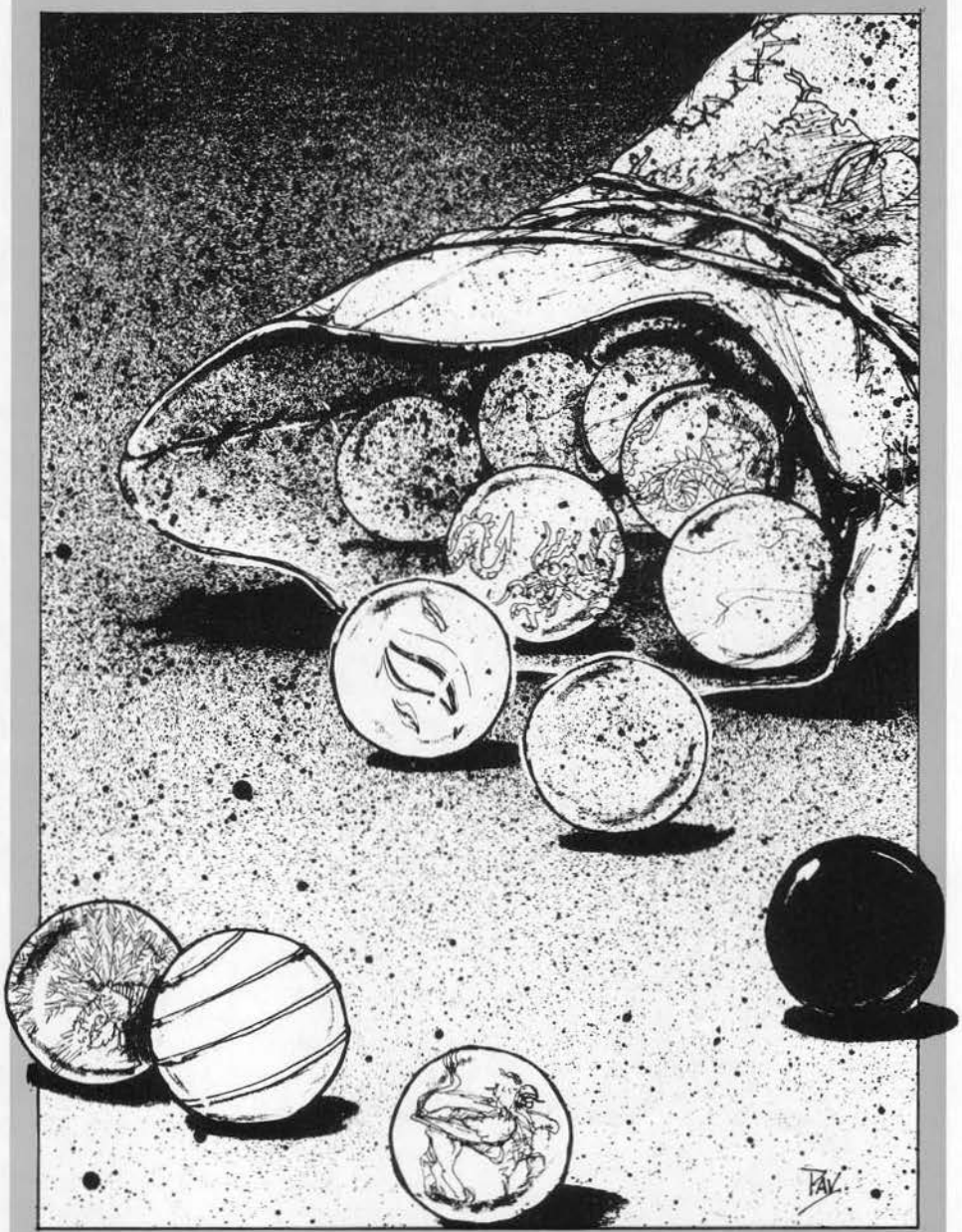
Ghost Rothe

These giant rothe are named for their white coats, their nocturnal gallops, and their ability to use *jump* and *silence 15' radius* once each per day as 2nd level casters; they can use both these powers in a single round. Many wayfarers in the North have been startled by a silent white rothe suddenly leaping over their campfire and galloping off into the night.

Ghost rothe dwell only on the surface—but can be found in caverns opening onto the surface, and in meltwater tunnels beneath glaciers when the weather is fierce. They inhabit cold lands, such as tundra, alpine meadows, and ice deserts, and are a favorite food of remorhaz and polar bears.

❑

You've Lost Your Marbles!



An AD&D® 2nd Edition Game Scenario
For 5-7 Characters, Levels 4-6

illustration by Terry Pavlet

by Paula & Steve Greenspan

DM's Overview

The adventuring party is a group of young friends from the city of Fluctawat, though the adventure could be set in any fantasy city. Fluctawat is a large city of about 8,000 and is the capital of the Province of Gronn. It is located on an island on the edge of Lake Oseena and at the mouth of the Henry River which drains into the lake. A suburb called Fluctawat's Landing, often regarded as part of the city, lines the shore nearby. Ferries regularly travel back and forth from the island, used by those who don't wish to take one of the two toll bridges.

Fluctawat is located along a major trade route, and its main commercial business is fishing. Freshwater clams and fish from Lake Oseena are dried and traded to mainland farmers and merchants heading upriver. A large number of artists reside in the city also, as the rulers of Gronn always have had a penchant for art. They have created a public display gallery for paintings, the only one known of in this part of the country. The Gallery Artiste is mainly subsidized by the nobility, although the Gallery charges a small entry fee.

The churches in Fluctawat are primarily of the Finnish mythos, although there are a few small shrines to other gods, primarily for the use of visitors. The residents are a blend of races—humans predominate, but dwarves and gnomes are common. Elves, halflings, half-orcs, and other races are less prevalent, but not unknown.

The party recently has been employed (as a group) by a firm called Odd Jobs. They receive a regular retainer plus a 50% commission upon successfully completing a job. They are not bound to accept any particular job, but if they refuse a job, they receive no retainer until they accept another.

The owner of the business, and the party's employer, is Clarsilla Artthur. She is a shrewd businesswoman who learned from her father, a widowed tailor, that happy customers return and bring their friends. As a youngster, Clarsilla watched babies, walked dogs, delivered packages across town, and did whatever else she could do. As she got older, she organized a group of children to run errands and took over the administrative end of things. She expanded

the scope of Odd Jobs over the years and recently adopted the motto "We'll do anything—for a price." She still employs the kids for small errands, and that part of her business continues to thrive. However, she also employs more capable folks for the tougher jobs. She is a fair boss and attempts to divide the work evenly according to the abilities of her employees. She will not give a job to someone who she doesn't believe can handle it, because she doesn't want to risk not satisfying a customer.

This is the party's first assignment, and Clarsilla is giving them what she believes will be an easy task. If necessary, she will pressure them to accept it because they need to demonstrate their skills to her so she can increase the difficulty of their assignments later. If the PCs refuse the job, she tells them her other employees are busy elsewhere and she needs the PCs for this.

The Mission

Little Richard Walth (Richie) has lost a bag of marbles and wants them retrieved. In reality, his marbles are gemstones carved into spheres for use in an intricate strategy game. Richie thought he could borrow them from his parents and replace them before being found out. Unfortunately, a bully pushed him and he dropped the marble gemstones down a storm drain. His parents own more than a complete set of the gemstone game pieces, and he has offered to give Odd Jobs the extra marbles for returning the rest by sundown. A complete set is 50 pieces. There are 13 extra. Richie does not know the exact count of marbles. The game is called Gomillik, which is something like a cross between Chinese checkers and chess.

The party must enter the storm drains to find the marbles. To complicate matters, there was a heavy rainstorm last night and the torrent washed the marbles further down the sewers. The search for the marbles will lead the group through several obstacles.

Players' Overview

Read this to the players before they pick spells or buy equipment.

> Odd Jobs is the name of the company you and your group of friends have agreed to work for. You wonder just how "odd" the jobs will be—especially since your new boss, Mistress Clarsilla Artthur, says the company's slogan is "We'll do anything—for a price." You will find out soon what "anything" is since you just got a message to come in to the office right away.
>
> The Odd Jobs office is in the business section of town. You're all somewhat familiar with the city of Fluctawat. It is located on an island in Lake Oseena and is the capital of the Province of Gronn. The current ruler is Lady Libbie de Bedloe, who has a small palace at the southern tip of Fluctawat.
>
> As you think about your city's ruler, it occurs to you that Mistress Artthur has the same commanding air as Lady Libbie is said to evidence. She seems to be fair, and she's not quite overbearing, but she certainly expects others to do what she wants. Well, you'd better grab your gear and head over to see her.

She Wants Us to Look for Marbles?

> You file into Odd Jobs, wondering about your first assignment. Mistress Artthur is sitting behind the desk in the entryway.
>
> "Good afternoon. Let's go into my office," she says, as she stands and leads the way. Mistress Artthur's office barely accommodates your group, but you manage to squeeze in. She sits behind the desk and waits until you've all found seats, then begins. "Well, I've got a job for you. A poor little boy has lost his bag of marbles down the storm drain. He knows where he lost it, and it should be a simple task to climb down and retrieve it. Will you do it?"

If the party asks a lot of questions or refuses the job, Clarsilla tries to press them into accepting by pointing out that it should not take long. If necessary, she will remind them that if they refuse an assignment, she is not bound to give them the next good one that comes along. Further, if they refuse, they forfeit their retainer until they accept a job. She tends to be somewhat terse. Clarsilla will NOT mention that she knows Richie's parents are quite rich and the marbles are likely to be valuable. However, if asked, she will tell the group they will receive some of the marbles as their reward. Also, if asked, she will tell the party that anything else they find while retrieving the marbles is theirs to keep—as long as it is obtained legally.

Once the group has accepted this fateful mission, Clarsilla calls Richie in from another room and prompts him to:

> "Tell these nice people all about your marbles, Richie, and how you lost them. They're going to find them for you."
>
> Richie, a seven year old human boy with a rip in his shirt and mud on his pants, is a little vague as he blurts:
>
> "Uh, they're really my papa's and he'll skin me alive if he found out I lost his marbles when I wasn't supposed to play with them. And uh, they belong with a game he has and he's supposed to play it tonight with a bunch of his friends, including Uncle Ed who's really nice, but they won't be able to and it's my fault and he's gonna be really mad. Um, they-'re different colors with pictures on the sides, and they were in a pretty bag—red with a burning dragon on it. And I was gonna win some more marbles for my collection by playing a game with the extra ones with Tommy Bates, but that big bully Alex stopped me in the alley and shoved me. I hate him! And I dropped them down the drain and I couldn't get them back, and now they're lost. Anyway, there's at least a few dozen of 'em in the set, and then there's a couple a extras. Will you get my papa's marbles back so I don't get in trouble? Please?"

If pressed, Richie will list the pictures on the marbles as those of dragons, unicorns and lions. If asked when he lost them, he'll say it was, "Yesterday, before the rain. My mama wouldn't let me come out after it started raining so I couldn't come until today."

Once the party has had a few minutes to question Richie and discovers that he has no more sound information to provide, Clarsilla will break in and say:

> "Now Richie, you told me you need the marbles back before sundown so your father doesn't miss them right? You'd better show these people where you lost them now, so they can start looking."

Entrance To The Sewers

You follow Richie through the business district toward an area which is fairly well-to-do. Before you reach it though, the boy turns down a small alley lined with garbage. He walks up to a 3′ square storm drain in the center of the alley and points to it. "I dropped them down there. I was cuttin through here to go to Tommy's house, but that Alex followed me and picked on me and made me drop them. But I'm gonna fix his wagon. I'm gonna do something to him, too."

Richie has no concrete plans for revenge on Alex, he is just voicing his anger. If the party discusses it with him, he will be easily swayed to a specific plan, or to forgetting it as long as he gets the marbles back.

There are no people in the alley at the moment, and the group won't be noticed loitering around or entering the grate. The grate is made of iron bars spaced about six inches apart. It is stuck down with dirt and rust so it takes two characters who both make successful open doors rolls to lift it. Under the grate is a 10′ drop: a 6′ long hole which is 3′ square opens into the round sewer tunnel which is 5′ in diameter.

The tunnel is damp and the stones lining it are stained with refuse. The whole tunnel smells of garbage and mold. A small stream of dirty water flows slowly along the rounded bottom, leaving small puddles amongst the pebbles and garbage.

To travel along these tunnels, anyone taller than 5′ will have to stoop and anyone taller than 5′6″ will have to crawl. Stooping gives −1 on all "to hit" rolls, and crawling gives −2. The group will have to travel single file. The water on the bottom varies from two to four inches deep. This is not enough to cause a problem for anyone crawling.

If the party travels upstream, they will discover the tunnel slopes up slightly and narrows to 3′ diameter. Eventually, it splits up and all paths come to dead ends with grates above.

On the Right Track

If the party travels downstream, the first character in the marching order almost immediately notices a very round white stone lying in a pile of leaves by the side of the water. It is actually made of white marble with an intricately carved lion inlaid in adamantite. It is about 1″ around. Upon examination, any PC can tell it is clearly quite valuable, possibly worth a few hundred gp.

As the party proceeds downstream, they find two more white marble stones—one lion and one unicorn.

Just Another Grate

As you travel through the sewers, you notice a patch of color up ahead. A profusion of red and orange mushrooms is growing on the wall here amid a large patch of greenish-purple moss. A dead giant rat lies just beyond this area; the water tugs gently at its body. Light filters down from a sewer grate above.

There is nothing dangerous here. The moss is growing in the light, the mushrooms happen to like the same environment, and the rat was washed up here by chance.

The Monster That Ate Fluctawat

As the party approaches a side passageway, two crocodiles that were lying in wait for some convenient prey (−2 to the party's surprise rolls), attack. These crocodiles were dumped here when they got too large and dangerous to keep in the washtub as pets.

Crocodiles (2): Int Animal; AL N; AC 5; MV 6, Sw 12; HD 2; hp 10, 12; THAC0 19; #AT 2; Dmg 2-8/1-12; SD Surprise; SZ M; ML 10; XP 65 each.

The crocodiles attack first with their bites. They cannot attack with their tails unless someone gets behind them. The tunnel is too narrow and the water is too shallow for a normal thrashing tail attack.

One crocodile's stomach contains a silver spoon worth 5 gp, a child's yo-yo, and a fishing lure; the other crocodile has swallowed a gold and sapphire ring worth 1,200 gp, an onyx marble, and a studded leather dog collar.

The side passageway which exits here has a small amount of water standing in the bottom. It is not flowing. If the party follows the side passageway, they find that it ends shortly, with a storm grate in the top above the dead end.

Sewage From Heaven

As you pass under yet another sewer grate, a shower of smelly water and rotting vegetables falls on (character 1 in the marching order) and (character 2).

Have each victim make a Dexterity check or fall splashing into a puddle of sludge in surprise. (This has no game effects, just play the incident for laughs.)

Which Way To Go?

The passageway opens up into an intersection. Two other tunnels split off here. The stream of water you've been walking or crawling in widens, and it is hard to tell which way the current flows. The water in both larger tunnels is deeper and slower, and there are some eddies and whorls around the intersection. However, as you watch, a leaf brushes past you from behind and bobs erratically down the right-hand passageway.

Although the current actually flows to the left, an object on the top of the water will float to the right, borne by a draft in the air, then be marooned on the side or pulled underwater and back toward the intersection after the characters lose sight of it. If the PCs float a lot of objects down the stream, they will go in each direction somewhat randomly, but biased toward the right. Whichever direction the party actually decides to try will, in fact, be the wrong direction—the direction leading to the encounter with the giant toads.

Fire Hazard

The water deepens to about a foot as you travel, and the odors intensify. It smells like a mixture of rancid oil and spoiled milk down here, and you hope you find the silly marbles soon! The water is coated with a large amount of oil.

Each character must make a Dexterity roll or slip and fall. Any falling character holding a lamp or torch will set the oily surface of the water on fire. Flames will sweep across the surface, inflicting 1d3 points of damage to each character. Any character falling or ducking under

the water that round will escape the damage as the fire passes over him.

Survey Says—Wrong Direction

Ahead, you see the tunnel open up into a larger area, and there even appears to be some dry floor and a few reddish brown rocks scattered about.

The rocks are four reddish brown giant toads who reside in an open area at the dead end of this passageway. This area has a higher ceiling than the sewer tunnels, so all characters can stand upright. The toads will not be apparent to the party until they have gotten up to the entrance—unless the PCs do something like throw objects at the reddish brown rocks.

Three of the toads will attack the party on sight. The fourth is actually a human who was *polymorphed* into a giant toad. He will yell "Beware" to the party as soon as he sees them. He will not aid them in their combat with the other toads, but will beg for mercy if the PCs try to attack him.

Fire Toads (3): Int Low; AL CN; AC 10; MV 6, hop 6; HD 2+4; hp 12 each; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg Variable; SA Fireball; SZ S; ML 9; XP 210 each.

A fire toad's fireball has a range of 30′ and a radius of 5′. The damage generated by the fireball is equal to the toad's present hit points. Victims can save for half damage.

Marvin the Toad: Int Low; AL CN; AC 6; MV 6, hop 6; HD 4+1; hp 30; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1-8; SZ M; ML 10; XP nil (slay), 135 (converse), 270 (accompanies party).

Marvin is a human merchant who was *polymorphed* into a giant toad by a wizard. He was wearing a magic ring of telepathic communication when this happened, which allows him to communicate with the party. The wizard who *polymorphed* Marvin was hired by some of Marvin's business rivals. Marvin escaped into the sewers and has been unable to get back out since he could not climb back up to a sewer grate. He has been here for a long time, learning the business of survival by watching the other toads. Marvin now accepts being a toad. His thought processes are slowing down to the level of a toad, so he has difficulty with complicated reasoning and is concerned mostly with his immediate comfort. Marvin communicates slowly and croaks verbally while he is communicating. Every once in a while, a large fly goes by and Marvin snatches it out of the air with his tongue. It will not be easy for the PCs to carry on a conversation with him. The PCs could convince Marvin to come with them and attempt to be made human again.

Marvin will not even think about his former life unless the PCs talk about some of the better aspects of being human—good food, friends, the beauty of the outside world, etc. If the PCs get Marvin thinking about being human again, he will agree to help them find marbles only if the PCs agree to help Marvin find a means for becoming human again. Marvin was not married, but did have a girlfriend, Amelia. On the other hand, he remembers that as a merchant, he was always busy working and never had time for doing what he wanted to do. He does not believe that there will be anything left of his business or home to go back to, and he would be penniless if he returned (an offer to share the PCs' reward would erase this attitude). If Marvin goes with the PCs, he will not participate in any combat. He will flee if his life seems to be in any danger.

The Left Way Is The Right Way

This tunnel is 5′ diameter and has about 6-8 inches of water in the bottom.

Stick To It

You are approaching another intersection. The ceiling is 6′ high here, and a pool of thick, dark water lies at the junction. The current clearly flows out of the pool into another passageway straight across from you, and out of the other two passages into the pool. The bottom of the scummy pool is not visible.

The pool is 18″ deep. Searching the pool yields leeches; a rotted wagon wheel; a small sack containing 6 gp, 2 sp and 8 cp; a battered tin cup; several broken sections of pottery of various faded colors and patterns; and four round ivory stones (some of the marbles) with beautiful mithril inlay patterns of two lions, one unicorn, and one griffin.

Any bare skin inserted into the pool attracts 1d4 leeches each round (it takes five rounds to completely search the pool). The leeches can be avoided by searching the pool with gloves or scooping with a tool. Leeches can be removed from the skin by simply grasping them and pulling hard, or by pouring salt on them. Marvin, if he is with the party, would have no difficulty retrieving the marbles in a round or two, but will attract leeches, much to his chagrin. Once the party discovers the leeches, Marvin won't go near the pool at all.

Leeches: Int Non; AL N; AC 9; MV Sw 1; HD ¼; hp 2; THAC0 Special; #AT 1; Dmg 1-4; SA Drain blood; SZ T; ML 5; XP nil (slay) 100 (avoided by PCs).

The tunnel which continues is again 5′ in diameter, but has about 8 inches of water on the bottom. The other two tunnels lead to a maze of sewer tunnels which slope upwards slightly and eventually narrow and come to dead ends, just as the one the characters come from.

Two, Two, Two Mimics In One

Four small, round green stones lie near a large broken rock at the side of the sewer tunnel.

This rock is actually a mimic which is in the middle of fission to produce an offspring. The mimic has been eating very well in the sewers of late, and in fact just finished off an osquip which was carrying four marbles this morning. It spit out the marbles as being undigestible. The mimic speaks Common. The process of fission is far enough along that each side of the mimic operates independently. However, having the same makeup and memory, they respond virtually identically to all situations. Therefore, the mimic's speech gives the odd impression of being echoed as each side speaks the same words with a very slight delay between. The mimic's name is Tom (Tom). It has recently begun to wonder whether there is anything more to life than eating rats, fish, and the occasional larger monster or humanoid—this seems so pointless. In short, it is bored. Perhaps these humanoids can show it something that will cheer it up for a while.

If a character attempts to pick up the marbles, the rock (mimic) will reach out an arm and grab the marbles just before the character does—automatic success. It will also protrude two pseudopods and attempt to grab the character (for no damage) and glue him up against itself.

Once that is accomplished, the mimic will inquire sweetly: "Did (did) you (you) want (want) those (those) stones (stones)?"

It will attempt to get the party to bargain for the release of the stuck character (if it captured anybody), accepting food or entertainment in exchange. It will also bargain for the "round stones." But since it has seen they can be used as bait, it will not trade the stones for food. It will trade them for entertainment. If you are amused, the mimic is amused. Such entertainment could include storytelling, singing, dancing, a demonstration of a skill or craft, etc. One amusing act (i.e. one PC performing) will get the return of the captured PC or a stone. In other words, the PCs will have to amuse the mimic five times to get four stones and the caught PC (though the mimic will accept food in return for releasing the PC). If the PCs are stuck and Marvin is with them, the toad recounts the PCs' battle with the toads, complete with sound effects—this amuses the mimic.

The stones are made of green jade with a lovely unicorn pattern inlaid in copper, and are part of Richie's game set.

Mimic (2, sort of): Int Average; AL N; AC 7; MV 3; HD 8; hp 61; THAC0 13; #AT 1; Dmg 3-12 (smash); SA Glue; SD Camouflage; SZ L; ML 15; XP 975 (slay), 1,400 (amuse).

Kachoo!

The air here has a stale smell mixed in with the normal offensive odors you've been smelling.

Each party member must save vs. breath weapon or have a sneezing attack caused by the concentration of mold spores in the air. Each affected character will sneeze intermittently for 2d8 rounds. During this period, the PC is −1 on all attacks. As long as any character is sneezing, the party will be unable to move quietly or sneak up on anything unless magic is used to silence the affected character(s).

Great, A Grate

A large metal gate blocks the entire passageway in front of you, attached right into the green slimy walls of the sewer. The gate ends just above the water line, so the water flows underneath it, but there are dead leaves, sticks, and many other bits of junk piled along the edges of the tunnel here and caught in the lower section of the gate.

There are no marbles caught in the debris here. They were carried underneath the gate. Among the dead leaves, torn papers, sticks and other such garbage, however, is a carved stick with metal-tipped ends. It is a *wand of flame extinguishing* with 27 charges and a command phrase of "Put It Out" etched on the side in Elvish. The PCs must state they are searching the floating debris to find the wand. Uttering "Put It Out" will extinguish the PCs' torch or lantern and knocks off one of the remaining charges on the wand. Not surprisingly, the metal of the gate is heavily rusted. The gate has a latch with a built-in lock, but that has also rusted shut. A thief must pick locks with a −30 penalty to open it. Although it has rusted, the metal of the gate is still strong enough that it cannot be broken through easily. Only an open doors roll at a −4 penalty will open it, and the party gets only one attempt. However, there is enough clearance under the gate so that Marvin and any slender PC can just squeeze under, equipment and all. A slender PC weighs less than 70% of his racial maximum, but no heavier than 180 pounds in any case. The limits for common races are: dwarf 119 pounds, elf 84 pounds, gnome 65 pounds, half elf 102 pounds, halfling 50 pounds, and human 140 pounds. A character who is less than 10 pounds over the limit can remove all armor and most clothing, cover himself with oil (lamp oil is fine), and squeeze underneath. Crawling under the gate requires entering the water. Each character who attempts this becomes wet, cold, and covered with leaves and other gunk.

If all else fails, the characters can attempt to break through by just bashing down the gate, they must dish out 200 points of damage to the gate, which is AC 4.

Oh, Look!

A four-foot diameter tunnel joins the tunnel where you are traveling. There are puddles on its floor, but there are enough dry spots to walk on.

If one or more party members state they are looking at the tunnel floor, they notice a small, carved sphere against the side. If no one looks, this marble is passed over. The sphere is carved in a rich black stone (onyx). It is one inch in diameter and has a tiny, intricately carved dragon inlaid in silver on it. It belongs to Richie's marble set.

Marbles, Marbles, Who's Got The Marbles

The passageway ends up ahead. Just before the end is a grate in the top of the tunnel similar to the one through which you entered the sewers. There is a small, damp pile of fallen leaves and other debris past the grate.

Through The Secret Door

Characters have double their normal chance of finding the crudely-made secret door at the end of the sewer. In addition, after four rounds of searching, they automatically find it. If the PCs do not search for the secret door or give up before finding it, proceed to "Waiter, There's A Man In My Soup."

Beyond the secret door is a small alcove which contains the possessions of a mongrelman who is currently concealed in the shadows at the rear of the alcove. The party will not spot the mongrelman until after they have been in the alcove for a couple of rounds, as she has done a good job of camouflaging herself. A large canvas sack in the alcove contains: an empty, heavily mended waterskin; a rag wrapped around a smelly piece of sausage; three torch stubs; a dull knife with a broken tip; a small sack containing a tarnished silver brooch with a small pearl in the center (15 gp if cleaned up), a jagged piece of rose quartz (3 gp), a lovely blue ceramic vase with the top broken off (worthless), and a heavy red cloth bag of marbles.

The female mongrelman, Riilip, is the most repulsive thing any of the characters have seen. Her mottled green, warty hide is covered with patches of

yellow-green fur. She has hairy feet with long sharp nails, and a general lopsided look with one large muscular arm and hand, and one small vestigial arm ending in a furry paw. She is wearing tattered, gray rags and is cowering in the shadows in a back corner of the alcove. When discovered, Riilip will plead in her broken Common, interspersed with grunts and whimpers, for her life. She also begs that her possessions be left alone. She knows others consider her disgusting in appearance and has only unpleasant memories of her occasional encounters with people. She is young (about 8 years old), but has no concept of her age other than that she has lived in the sewers for as long as she can remember. If the party treats her well, she will retain a frightened, cowering manner but will attempt to get a trade of one item for each possession (including each marble) that the party wishes to take from her. For example, Riilip would be willing to trade one gold coin for one marble, or one weapon for one marble, or food (one day's rations) for one marble, etc. No Exceptions—one item for one marble. Further, she will not accept in coins anything less than one gold coin for one marble (she knows copper and silver aren't worth as much). Riilip has 50 marbles in her bag. Therefore, the PCs will have to give up 50 items to get all the marbles. To help you determine what is an acceptable one-on-one trade, consult the list at the end of this encounter. The PCs can use force to get the marbles, as she is too frightened to put up a fight; However, they're not being very nice if they do this (they also get less experience for fighting here; no xp for killing Riilip, 5 xp for each marble Riilip trades to the PCs).

Riilip loves to look at pretty things and will happily accept anything shiny or brightly colored as part of the trade: coins, weapons, jewelry. She is enchanted by any cute pet or familiar, and will be bold enough to request such an animal as part of the trade. She is perpetually hungry, and any sort of food will be greedily accepted. She does not want anything that is not edible, attractive, or useful to her, and she definitely does not want a mirror. She is ashamed of her looks. If the party is especially nice to Riilip, or one character treats her particularly well, she may ask if they will come visit her again. However, she will strongly resist any suggestion that she leave the sewers.

Riilip's Bag of Marbles

The marbles are contained in a heavy, red cloth bag, embroidered with a flaming griffin in gold and silver threads. The bag, which is filthy and reeks of the sewer, has split partially open along a seam. Each 1-inch diameter marble inside has an intricate design inlaid into it with a contrasting metal. There is one complete set of 50 marbles, 10 each of 5 different colored stones: red striped agate with platinum inlay, black onyx with silver inlay, green jade with copper inlay, pink jade with gold inlay, and white marble with adamantite inlay. For each color, there is 1 marble decorated with a dragon, 2 with griffins, 3 with unicorns, and 4 with lions.

Items Accepted for Trade

Size "S" or "M" weapons (bows of any kind also are acceptable), brightly colored clothing (even if it won't fit right), jewelry (paired items such as bracelets or earrings count as one item), gold coins, pouches, belts, pouches, sacks, candles, tools, armor (even if it doesn't fit), rope (one trade per length of 15′ or longer, and Riillip is smart enough to notice if the PCs try to cut a rope into multiple pieces), and food (one day's worth equals one trade). Riillip will not accept foot gear (shoes that don't fit *hurt*). Multi-part items such as tinderboxes count as one item; so would a needle and thread.

Waiter, There's A Man In My Soup

Just before the dead end, a grate opens up into the street. If the characters choose to take this path, they emerge into the dining area of an outdoor cafe. By this time, the group is covered in mud, slime, and sewage. They look disgusting and smell worse. Choose one character to accidentally knock a patron's soup into her lap. The patron, a fat, middle-aged woman wearing bright clothes and a hat with fruit on it, stands up and screams. A waiter comes running over, waving a pot of hot coffee in one hand and a dishtowel in the other, and goes into a tirade about hooligans, riffraff, and gutter slime. He finishes by ordering them away. Depending on how the characters react, this encounter can be extended by having the waiter insist on payment for the intrusion and lost business, or attempt to detain the party and call the town guard. If the party becomes violent, he will desist until they are on their way and then shout after them, "I'm putting in a complaint about this. You'll be hearing from the guards."

Gone To The Dogs

No matter where the PCs emerge from the sewer, the group is trailed by an ever increasing number of dogs. First, a little brown and white beagle begins trotting after them. It comes up and sniffs their legs, automatically tripping someone in the process. It follows the group and is joined by dog after dog of all sorts. A small girl walking a shepherd on a leash gets dragged along behind the pack, sobbing and yelling, "Stop, Bruno. Please stop!" The dogs are fascinated by some smell that the party picked up in the sewers and all follow closely. The party is forced to travel slowly, as otherwise dogs would be tripping them at every step. Use these statistics for the dogs if the PCs decide to attack them:

Stray Dogs (40): Int Semi, AL N, AC 7, MV 15, HD 1+1, hp varies, THAC0 19, #AT 1, Dmg 1-4, SZ S, ML 7, XP 35 each.

Any attempt the PCs make to lose the dogs is doomed to failure. If they succeed in ridding themselves of the current pack, more dogs quickly replace them. Assuming the PCs did not kill any dogs, when they reach their headquarters, they can barely squeeze in without letting in any dogs. After the party has been inside for a few minutes, the dogs slowly disperse.

The Triumphant Return

Back at the office, little Richie is waiting anxiously. When he sees the bag of marbles, his face lights up. He can hardly wait for the marbles to be sorted, and runs off with the set of 50 as soon as possible. Odd Jobs receives all of the extra marbles (9 ivory and 3 green jade marbles if all marbles were retrieved). The party receives half of those (6 if they found all the marbles), and Clarsilla allows them to take their pick. Although the marbles would be worth much more in a complete set, they are still made of valuable gems and metals and the designs are of impeccable, detailed workmanship. They will sell for approximately 400 gp each. Further, each PC in the group earns an extra 10 xp for every marble found.

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With Great Power

More Campaign Construction

by Dale A. Donovan

In the previous installment on building super hero campaigns, I detailed the Character Point system for creating MARVEL SUPER HEROES game characters. Now we'll recap that system and cover developing a concept for characters and super hero groups.

Character Point Summary

The Game Master assigns each player a number of CPs to use when building his hero. This was covered in depth in issue #72. The player does not roll dice to determine his character's abilities, powers, etc. The number of CPs, which can range from 200 to 500 or more, is used for that.

Each player buys his FASERIP abilities on a point-for-point basis. For example, he could buy Remarkable (26) Agility or Remarkable (36) Agility for his heroes, costing 26 or 36 points respectively, with the only immediate difference being reflected in the hero's Health score. Figure the character's Health and Karma normally. Then, subtract the Character Points spent on this process, and this is the number of points you still have to work with.

The player now buys his hero's Resources rank, paying two CPs for every point of Resources Rank. The hero's popularity score is not derived from spending CPs, as it is a function of the hero's origin and public image.

Next, the player purchases power "slots" like those generated in the Powers, Talents, and Contacts Table in the MARVEL SUPER HEROES Advanced Set's *Players' Book* (page 7). Asterisked powers cost 20 CPs to buy, and all other powers cost 10 CPs. Buying these slots allows the player to purchase Power ranks in the powers he just acquired. For asterisked powers, ranks are purchased at two CPs for each point of power rank. All other powers' ranks are purchased on a point-for-point basis.

Page nine of the *Players' Book* gives a list of possible limitations a player can apply to his hero's powers. A player can buy *one* limitation per hero with the GM's permission to gain more CPs. Use the maximums listed at the top of each list of limitations on page nine for the number of CPs gained from taking a certain limitation. Points gained through limitations are the normal rank numbers for that rank only (all Excellent limitations gain the player 20 CPs to spend on his hero), and they need not all be spent immediately. All normal rules regarding limitations apply. Subtract all CPs spent on powers and ranks and add any CPs from limitations to figure the new CP total for the hero.

The player now purchases Talents and Contacts for his hero. Talents listed under the Weapon, Fighting, and Mystical or Mental Skills cost 10 CPs each. All other Talents cost 5 CPs. Contacts cost 5 CPs each, unless the GM rules otherwise.

That's all there is to the CP system. Now all the player has to do is fill in the hero's blanks, such as origin, etc.

Character Concepts

It's true in every super hero system that allows you to build heroes from scratch—having a strong character concept in mind *before* you begin creating the hero results in a more coherent and efficiently built hero. In a super hero role playing game, the first thing most players are concerned with is their PCs' powers. I'll first discuss conceptualizing heroes by type as defined by their powers. (For more information on the types or "templates" described below and combat tactics each type can use, see DRAGON® Magazine #171 for the article "It's Clobberin' Time!" by yours truly.)

Infantry: These heroes generally lack actual super powers, such as Mockingbird, Punisher, and Captain America. Characters such as these, if they were created now, would not be spending any CPs on power slots and ranks—so their designing players could devote many CPs to the heroes' FASERIP scores, Talents, Contacts, and, in some cases, equipment that allows the heroes some offensive "punch" (e.g. the Punisher's seemingly endless supply of weapons).

Speedsters: This hero template is pretty self-explanatory. High-speed ground movement powers like those of Quicksilver, Super Sabre or Speedfreak are needed to qualify. When designing heroes like these, spending CPs on a high Agility, Endurance, and even on some Body Armor (to cushion charging attacks) would be helpful additions to the movement power itself.

Airborne: These heroes' primary super power is that of flight, usually plus super strength. Both Namorita and Nova of the New Warriors fall into this category. Heroes like these are simple to design. Purchase their flight powers, a high strength, and some Talents that will help either (or both) of those powers work better.

Shock Troops or Bricks: These are the strongest characters around. She-Hulk and The Thing are probably the two best examples. When building heroes like these, after purchasing a high Strength rank, select good Fighting and Endurance scores—these are important, as are defensive or regenerative powers to help the heroes last longer in combat against similarly powered super villains.

Artillery: Heroes who fall into this category are primarily energy projectors (e.g. Distance Attacks powers). Cyclops and Living Lightning are artillery heroes. Since many energy projectors are otherwise normal humans, additional powers that add to the defensive capabilities of these heroes are important. Likely powers are flight or some other movement power, force fields, body transformation (e.g. Living Lightning above) or a close-range power that is similar to the distance attack.

Stealth: These heroes can move about unbeknownst to others in the vicinity. Nightcrawler and the Invisible Woman are quite different examples of heroes in this category. To design heroes such as these players need to buy powers like invisibility, darkness or shadow generation, or illusions to mask their presence. An unobtrusive movement power like wall-crawling or teleportation is also a good buy. An invisible, flying hero is incredibly difficult to detect if the villains aren't actively seeking him out (I know, I played one recently).

Mentalists: Mental powers are the specialty of some heroes. Marvel Girl and Charles Xavier are mentalists. As with artillery heroes, some type of defensive power will help these otherwise

normal folks tough it out in combat. For many mentalists, the defensive powers of choice are illusion generation or a force field.

Special Forces: these heroes are those who possess such a wide variety of powers that they would qualify for multiple categories listed above. The Vision, Thor and Iron Man are all special forces heroes. Designing such powerful heroes may be beyond the scope of many MARVEL SUPER HEROES campaigns.

Motivations And Goals

There's more to be concerned with when building heroes than just super powers. Players must also consider just who the people are under the mask. If Peter Parker had been bitten by a radioactive cockroach instead of a spider, the hero we know as Spider-Man would be quite different as far as his powers go, but the man inside the costume would be the same wise-cracking guy motivated by guilt over his uncle's death. Be sure to run down the checklist and answer all the questions listed under "Filling in the Blanks" on page 12 of the *Players' Book.*

The one point I'd like to emphasize again here is why do your heroes do what they do? What are the goals of these people? Why are they out laying their lives on the line for people they do not know and sometimes—even for those who profess to actually hate the heroes for what they are or what they represent? This should be the key to each and every super hero character in every super hero game campaign (and comic, for that matter). The *DC Heroes* super hero RPG has a terrific set of motivations from which players can choose. These motivations include *Responsibility of Power, Thrill of Adventure, Unwanted Power,* and others. I recommend all super hero RPG players read that section.

Often going hand-in-hand with heroes' motivations are their origins. Exactly how did they receive their super powers? Each origin should tie in with each hero's powers and his motivation. The CP system lets players build the heroes of their dreams; don't sell the characters short by ignoring all the role playing possibilities and sheer cohesiveness a strong origin, motivation, and goal can give each character.

Characters As A Group

One aspect of character design that is often neglected by super hero RPG players and GMs alike is designing the super hero group. Each player in the group is intent on creating his own hero, with all the Powers, Talents, etc. that the player deems necessary or fun for *his* character—without regard for how his character will fit in with the rest of the group. The CP system, and the other purchasing systems are flexible enough to allow the GM and players to sit down and discuss exactly what kinds of heroes will work best in this campaign and which heroes would make the best team. This discussion often begins with players choosing hero templates like those listed above and then progresses on to specifics as the players narrow their visions of their characters to better fit the group, guided by the advice of the GM.

Once the team makeup is decided, the next thing to work out is why are all these characters together? Did they know each other in the past, possibly before they gained their powers? Do they have a common foe or foes? Do they possess a common origin? Why have the heroes come together now: to save the world from the imminent alien invasion the characters just discovered? To represent their national pride and defeat their country's foes? To protect the people from evil and super villainy everywhere? Again, the GM can lead this discussion of the group's mission or goals even before the characters are created.

This all may seem like a lot of work, but GMs and players needn't decide every detail of the campaign before play starts. It's really much easier than it sounds, just have a brainstorming session before you create the characters, tossing out ideas and counter-ideas until everyone has a basic grasp of what is going on. Take notes. The GM should guide the discussion, mediating any disputes and helping to clarify the vision of the campaign as it forms. Once this campaign foundation has been formed, build the heroes. Everyone might be surprised how easily the characters form when the players have some ideas to work from.

That's it for this time. In the next installment of the Campaign Construction Series, I'll begin taking a look a subgenres within the world of super heroes and comic books. I'm still looking for comments or suggestions regarding the column, this series, and what you want to see in the future. Write to: Dale A. Donovan, c/o POLYHEDRON® Newszine, P.O. Box 515, Lake Geneva, WI 53147. I'm looking forward to hearing from you.

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Thri-kreen

Language of the Mantis Warriors

by Timothy B. Brown

The thri-kreen of the Athasian hinterlands share a common language. While there are dialects particular to locations, all thri-kreen and tohr-kreen can understand one another fairly well. For instance, thri-kreen from the scrub plains around Gulg have some dialectic differences with those from beyond the Ringing Mountains, but rarely is an interpreter needed during individual contact.

Physiology of Thri-kreen Speech

The thri-kreen anatomy is markedly different from that of the demi-human races, and, therefore, their ability to produce controlled sounds is dissimilar. Like demi-humans, a thri-kreen passes air across vocal cords to produce sounds, but the very materials that make up its throat and larynx—combined with the sheer length of the esophagus—generates a deeper resonance.

The thri-kreen's ability to shape that sound is limited by the architecture of its mouth. The mantis warrior has a tongue and lateral jaws with which to make a variety of noises. However, having no lips or any other feature that allows it to completely close its mouth, there are some sounds that it simply cannot make, most notably *b, f, m, p,* and *v.* Of course, from the thri-kreen's point of view, these are useless consonants that don't appear in their language.

Interestingly, thri-kreen use variations in volume to indicate different moods and emotions, and to a demi-human, these variations tend toward the extremes. A soft-spoken thri-kreen phrase might be inaudible against even a gentle breeze, and the thri-kreen will be reluctant to change his meaning by "speaking up." At the opposite extreme, an excited thri-kreen may deafen nearby demi-humans in a sudden, unwelcome surge of volume. Those who deal with thri-kreen frequently come to accept these nuances of speech as unalterable.

Click: The click is a facet of thri-kreen language peculiar to their physiology. Most often inserted between consonants in a word, the click is made by popping the tongue against either side of the jaw.

Rush/Grind: Another unique thri-kreen sound, the rush/grind is an audible blast of air from the lungs accompanied by a gnashing of its jaws.

Growth of the Thri-kreen Language

The origins of the thri-kreen are lost to history. The only thing that is certain is that they did not originate in the Tyr region. The vast numbers of thri-kreen and tohr-kreen tribes beyond the Ringing Mountains suggest that their origins lie there, in the distant wildernesses of Athas.

Certainly, their kind always have been carnivores. From the time when thri-kreen hunted independently, they gradually organized into packs and then tribes. As their organization grew, so too did their command of language.

Primitive, independent thri-kreen must have had little use for their ability to make sounds. Cooperation, however, necessitated communication, and the thri-kreen language was born. Starting with simple concepts such as the nomenclature of friend and prey, terrain, direction, and tactics, the language grew rapidly. More recent innovations have become necessary as the thri-kreen have begun dealing with the other intelligent races as something other than food.

Communication with the Other Races

Trade and other activities have made interracial communication a necessity. However, the difficulties of translation have been many.

Members of other races, such as humans and elves, attempting to speak the thri-kreen language must master its peculiarities. For instance, the thri-kreen click, included in most thri-kreen words, is impossible for the human mouth to duplicate. Human masters of the thri-kreen language substitute with other means, either clapping their hands or snapping their fingers in syncopation with the spoken word; those less familiar with the language often leave the clicks out and hope the thri-kreen listener will understand. Very accomplished human and demi-human thri-kreen speakers can produce clicks, this ability is very rare and sounds very differently from the "real" thing. Similarly, recreating the rush/grind is physiologically impossible for a non-insect. Human masters of the language either growl or exhale to simulate the effect.

Thri-kreen attempting to speak the tongues of other races run into similar difficulties. Having no lips, they simply cannot duplicate many common consonants, such as *b, f, m, p,* and *v.* These consonants do not exist in the thri-kreen language. Thri-kreen replace these consonants with those they can produce more easily, usually *k* or *d,* making translation an adventure in interpretation and repetition. Many thri-kreen haven't the temperament for this slow process, so give up in frustration. Thri-kreen would much rather the other races learn their language.

Nonverbal Communications: While there are thousands of subtle body movements that thri-kreen understand among themselves, only a few have been successfully interpreted by other races. For example, a thri-kreen that crosses its antennae is indicating "no" or "negative."

Thri-kreen Words for Your Campaign

Creating thri-kreen-sounding words lends an air of authenticity to your DARK SUN™ campaign. Their character names, names of tribes and items—even words for abstract concepts such as "friend" or "meat animal"—help bring their race and culture to life. However, rather than give a list of possible thri-kreen nouns, verbs, adjectives, etc., that would bore even a dragon to tears, here instead is a means to roll up thri-kreen words of your own.

Once generated, you assign meaning to the words. Your PCs have run into a lone thri-kreen? Roll up a name for him. He's carrying a strange artifact? Roll up the word he's using for it.

The Tables: The three tables provide initial, middle, and final syllables for thri-kreen words. They are numbered 1 through 40; roll 1d40 for random generation or simply pick and choose the syllables you like.

The syllables are true to thri-kreen speech patterns; absent are the consonants they have trouble saying. The ! represents the rush/grind sound. The rush/grind can appear anywhere in a word.

One Syllable at a Time

Follow these steps to create a new thri-kreen word.

Number of Syllables: Thri-kreen words have two to four syllables. Roll 2d2 to determine how many.

Generating Syllables: Every word has an initial syllable. Roll 1d40 and write it down. It's also a good idea to note the proper pronunciation of that syllable. Words with three or four syllables have one or two middle syllables. Generate these, if necessary, and write them down. All words have a final syllable. Roll it up and write it down.

Inserting Clicks: Wherever a syllable that ends in a consonant is followed by a syllable that begins with a consonant, insert a click. Similarly, wherever a syllable that ends in a vowel is followed by a syllable that begins in a vowel, insert a click. A click is noted with a ' symbol.

Emphasis: The longest syllable in the word (by letter count) gets emphasis. In a tie, the first of these gets emphasis.

Pronunciation

The pronunciation key is based on the one found in the *American Heritage Dictionary.*

a **pat** / aĕ **pay** / âr **care** / ä **father** / ch **church** / d **deed** / e **pet** / ē **be** / g **gag** / h **hat** / i **pit** / ī **pie** / îr **pier** / j **judge** / k **kick** / l **lid, needle** / n **no, sudden** / ng **thing** / o **pot** / ō **toe** / ô **paw, for** / oi **noise** / ou **out** / oo **boot** / r **roar** / sh **ship, dish** / t **tight** / th **thin, path** / u **cut** / ùr **urge** / w **with** / y **yes** / z **zebra, size** / zh **vision** / e **about, item, gallop, circus**

Thri-kreen Examples

1. The 2d2 are rolled to make a two syllable word. The initial syllable roll is 39, xk (zik). The final syllable roll is 14, kry (krē). Since the first syllable ends in a consonant and the second syllable begins with a consonant, a click must be inserted between them. The word is xk'kry (zik-'-krē'). Since the second syllable is longer, emphasis is placed there.

2. The 2d2 are rolled, yielding three syllables. The initial syllable roll is 26, o (ō). The middle syllable roll is 10, eth (eth). The final syllable roll is 33, xk (zek). After inserting the necessary clicks, the word is o'eth'xk (ō-'-eth'-'-zek). Emphasis is placed on the second syllable.

Initial Syllable		Middle Syllables		Final Syllable	
1	ahk (äk)	1	aj (aj)	1	ahk (äk)
2	ak (ak)	2	al (al)	2	al (el)
3	chu (chu)	3	at (at)	3	ath (ath)
4	dok (dok)	4	ath (ath)	4	chu (chu)
5	dy (dē)	5	az (a)	5	chur (cher)
6	gak (gak)	6	da (dā)	6	dy (dē)
7	go (gō)	7	drd (dùrd)	7	eth (eth)
8	gut (gut)	8	dul (dūl)	8	gak (gak)
9	hk (huk)	9	dy (dē)	9	ht (hut)
10	ht (hut)	10	eth (eth)	10	jal (jäl)
11	hy (hē)	11	gax (gaks)	11	jen (jen)
12	jal (jäl)	12	gry (gri)	12	kik (kik)
13	jk (juk)	13	gut (gut)	13	krk (kùrk)
14	kaar (kār)	14	ht (hut)	14	kry (krē)
15	klu (klū)	15	jk (juk)	15	kst (kist)
16	kri (kri)	16	ka (kä)	16	kur (ker)
17	kst (kist)	17	kaar (kār)	17	kwi (kwī)
18	kt (ket)	18	kk (kik)	18	l (el)
19	lj (lej)	19	kry (krē)	19	lk (lik)
20	lk (lik)	20	lk (lik)	20	loy (loi)
21	loy (loi)	21	nek (nek)	21	n (en)
22	ng (eng)	22	ng (eng)	22	ny (nē)
23	nok (nok)	23	ny (nē)	23	ol (ôl)
24	nuk (nuk)	24	ok (ōk)	24	ras (ras)
25	ny (nē)	25	ras (ras)	25	skar (skär)
26	o (ō)	26	rez (rezh)	26	st (sôt)
27	ok (ōk)	27	rj (rej)	27	sy (sē)
28	ol (ôl)	28	schist (shist)	28	t (et)
29	on (ôn)	29	sk (sek)	29	tet (tet)
30	rj (rej)	30	syt (sēt)	30	tlk (telk)
31	rk (rêk)	31	t (tē)	31	urk (ùrk)
32	sk (sek)	32	tchu (chū)	32	uzd (ezd)
33	sot (sot)	33	til (til)	33	xk (zek)
34	ss (sis)	34	xa (zä)	34	ya (yä)
35	t (tē)	35	y (ē)	35	yl (il)
36	tchu (chū)	36	yk (ik)	36	yn (in)
37	tj (tej)	37	yl (il)	37	yus (yōōs)
38	toy (toi)	38	yn (in)	38	zan (zem)
39	xk (zik)	39	zen (zhen)	39	zen (zhen)
40	!	40	!	40	!

❑

The Living Galaxy

The Case Of The Missing Adventures

by Roger E. Moore

If you are the Game Master of a science fiction role playing campaign, one thing's for certain: Sooner or later, you're going to run out of "official" published adventures. Maybe you've bought them all (or only the "good" ones), but they're gone. When that happens, you'll have to scrabble around and make up your own—and as you might well know, this can be a problem.

Many companies that create science fiction role playing games haven't produced very many adventures for them, focusing instead on campaign packs filled with world listings, histories, cultures, customs, organizations, and laws applicable to the official interstellar neighborhood. This is nice, but it doesn't help the desperate GM who has two days to go until friends show up for an evening of gaming—and he hasn't a clue what the adventure will be.

One of the keys to creative problem-solving is to simply jam your mind with as many facts and concepts as possible, showering yourself with every idea you can find that might have a bearing on the problem at hand. From that flood of data, you will develop a better perspective of the problem and be able to see solutions.

Applying that concept here, one possible solution to the lack of adventures for your campaign is to go outside the narrow confines of your game system and hijack scenario ideas, outlines, or full-blown adventures from the modules of other games. You can convert these to your own game system with some pencilwork and a little imagination, and you will never lack for ideas again—or so you hope. Remember, *many* science fiction games suffer from a lack of scenario ideas. Some rule books list page after page of equipment items or character skills, but have only a few paragraphs on what sorts of adventures you can run with this system. (Maybe we're supposed to have some sort of genetic knowledge to figure out what to do.)

Then, too, some of the published adventures for other science fiction games might be very hard to convert to your current system, given the amount of campaign- or game-specific material in them and their choice of campaign theme. For example, I would not use one of TSR's old STAR FRONTIERS® modules about the war with the xenophobic Sathar for a cyberpunk game. And it would take a lot of pencilwork to convert the former to the more appropriate *Star Wars: The RPG* system, from West End Games, or to GDW's *Mega-Traveller* game.

In short, you're not going to escape the work involved in generating new adventures. In that light, using fully developed official adventure modules is your basic GM's training for the more challenging and satisfying business of winging it on your own. No one said, however, that you couldn't have help.

What's needed are some reasonably generic adventure outlines or adventure starters, preferably contained in game products that each offer lots of these. It's better still if the adventures are highly detailed when it comes to plot, characterization, and setting, with a minimal reliance on game-specific mechanics. Fleshing out the bare bones of these ideas and plots is your chance to exercise your creative freedom and prove to everyone that you've got what it takes to be a first-class GM. (Believe me, everyone's got this potential!)

The following are some game products that you can use to dig up ideas and plot outlines for loads of science fiction quests and adventures. I've tried to select material that can be used in a number of different game systems; you'll have to be the final judge of how well these operate for your campaign. In the places where I recommend a certain product for any "interstellar" game, I'm thinking in particular of West End Games' *Star Wars,* GDW's *MegaTraveller,* FASA's *Star Trek,* FGU's *Space Opera,* ICE's *Space Master,* and similar games in which the realm of human influence is on a large galactic scale. GDW's *2300 AD,* SPI's *Universe,* and TSR's STAR FRONTIERS games offer much smaller official universes, but many products named here can be used with them as well. In the latter case, you may have to modify certain adventures to take place on already established worlds rather than on new ones that you are adding to the campaign.

Note: The use of an asterisk (*) in a product description indicates that the product is no longer in print. However, it might be available through "oldies" bins in hobby stores or at used-game auctions at game conventions, or you could advertise for these products through classified ads in this magazine. All of these products are well recommended even if some are hard to find; do your best, and keep your eyes open.

Military Adventures

Military campaigns were discussed in this column in issue #72, in the sections on Invasion and Defense set-ups. Interested GMs should consult the references given in that issue for further.

TS4 *Brushfire Wars* (for TSR's TOP SECRET/S.I.™ game); TSR, Inc. (1989); by Scott Bowles, Paula Bowne-Woods, Bob Kern, Mike Stackpole, Rick Swan, and John Terra. This is a superb collection of commando-style military adventures, each with subheads for the mission briefing, adventure set-up, GM's information, and mission repercussions. Eleven missions are included (four of them part of a larger campaign), and two city profiles at the end, Seoul and Beirut, offer numerous urban-warfare scenario ideas. This 96-page book is designed for use with the TSAC5 *Commando* supplement and includes a small amount of game-specific statistical information, but it is very long on plot. The *Commando* supplement is not needed to use the adventures. The scenarios can be easily adapted to take place on any relatively Earthlike colony world with the appropriate political situations; make some place-name changes, and you've got it made. This is highly recommended for use with "traveling mercenary" character groups, such as the kind once promoted in the old *Traveller* game in Book 4, *Mercenary.*

Merc: 2000 game (based on GDW's *Twilight: 2000* 2nd edition game); GDW (1990); by Loren K. Wiseman. This 120-page book depicts Earth in A.D. 2000, with tough multi-power competition and lots of terrorist, insurgency, criminal, brush-war, and mercenary action. As with the previous game entry, you'll

have to ignore or overwrite modern-Earth references in the scenarios here, but it's worth it. The section entitled "The Referee" (pages 46-51) offers a lot of tips on setting up and running military missions, virtually every bit of which is useful in designing commando or "traveling mercenary" science fiction campaigns. "Time, Travel and Encounters" (pages 70-83) has generic layouts of military-adventure locales, such as a checkpoint, bunker, barracks building, and POW camp; brief notes on possible encounters are also given. Seven typical missions (hostage rescue, opponent snatch, raid on terrorist camp, etc.) are given on pages 88-99, and two sample multi-part campaigns appear on pages 100-107. The rest of this book contains equipment lists, game-specific combat rules, and details on the messed-up world of 2000 A.D. Fortunately, lots of this stuff can be adapted to a mercenary campaign without much trouble, and it can only benefit any science fiction game it is used with. It's great.

Twilight Encounters boxed set (for GDW's *Twilight: 2000* 2nd edition game); GDW (1990); by Frank Chadwick. This nice set contains the set-ups, maps, counters, and everything else needed for 10 separate adventures for the *Twilight: 2000* game. The two large (wonderful) maps in this set can be used with any science fiction rules system and are in full color. The scenarios are equally adaptable and are presented on folders and cards; these wartime adventures involve investigations of or raids on a pirate-held lighthouse, a marauder encampment, a fortified farm, an abandoned village held by slavers, a castle, a mine, a nuclear-power plant, and other modern-tech (if slightly bombed-out) places. A 48-page booklet with the scenarios gives details on creating and running encounters in a variety of settings, as well as new rules, tables, and statistics for the *Twilight: 2000* game (you might be able to use some of these in your current game). This is an excellent addition to your library of military adventures.

* Book 4, *Mercenary* (for GDW's *Traveller* game); GDW (1987); by Frank Chadwick. Much of this 52-page booklet is taken up with game-specific information on creating military characters, running battles, and new equipment for the *Traveller* game. Some of this material might be adaptable to a military campaign in another game, but the best part for our purposes is "Tickets," the short chapter on creating missions for mercenary units. The different types of tickets—commando, cadre, striker, and security—are discussed, as are conditions of payment, individual rank, and repatriation. Five sample tickets are given, each of which could be adapted to any futuristic military campaign. You're better off borrowing this booklet rather than buying outright, unless the extra material is useful to you or you can get the booklet cheap.

* Adventure 7, *Broadsword* (for GDW's *Traveller* game); GDW (1982); by Loren Wiseman and Marc Miller. Four scenarios (raid, ambush on prisoner escort, starship escort, and boarding defense) are briefly detailed for a space-going mercenary company with access to its own starship. Of interest is the last scenario, in which the PCs must fight against teleporting psionic commandos who can appear aboard the mercenaries' ship wherever they choose. This 48-page booklet features a set of deck plans (1 square = 1.5 meters) for a mercenary starship capable of carrying 48 troops and crewmen, and it gives the tables of organization and equipment for four opposing military forces. But it also has a lot of statistical data specific to the parent game. Again, borrow this rather than buy it.

Shipboard Adventures

Adventures taking place aboard various spacecraft are hard to find, so you'll have to be particularly creative in making these up if you can't find game materials on them. You might check this column in issue #63, in which numerous ship-based adventure ideas were noted. (The columns in issues #60-62 and #69 discussed campaigns in which the adventuring group's starship is itself a player character.)

* *Action Aboard* (for GDW's *Traveller* game); FASA Corporation (1981); by Bill Paley. This 46-page booklet was a supplement for the packaged set of ISCV *King Richard* luxury-liner deck plans that FASA produced for GDW's game under license. About half of the booklet consists of non-player character descriptions for the crew of the *King Richard,* but many of these are linked together in such a way as to set the stage for a remarkable murder mystery in which almost everyone has a reason to kill everyone else. A detailed pirate-boarding and mutiny scenario is given on pages 25-29. Assorted notes are offered on pages 30-36 on other potential adventures using the liner, including hijacking, plague outbreak, bomb detection, ship crash, robbery, diplomacy, and espionage; these notes are very brief, however, and each scenario idea requires extensive development. A one-sheet set of deck plans for the *King Richard* is included, but it isn't necessary if you convert this material to your own game system and passenger-carrying spacecraft type. This is nice if you can find it.

* *Azhanti High Lightning* (for GDW's *Traveller* game); GDW (1980); by Frank Chadwick and Marc Miller. This boxed supplement to the old *Traveller* system has a rules booklet with six shipboard scenarios. Though these adventures have backgrounds specific to the *Traveller* Imperium, they can be rewritten to fit any interstellar campaign aboard any major ship for which deck plans exist. The scenarios include an assault against a crippled cruiser, covert infiltration using disguised warbots and warriors, a boarding by pirates, a theft of valuable wines, a "bug hunt" aboard a cruiser that has crashed into a gas giant's ammonia ocean, and a mutiny with a subsequent rescue-and-recovery attempt. This boxed set has all the deck plans for an enormous starship, plotted on a square grid (scale: ½" = 1.5 meters). Even without the rest of the set, the booklet's scenarios are still intriguing for adventure plots. If all you want are the adventures, borrow the booklet; if you want deck plans for a big ship, this one's great.

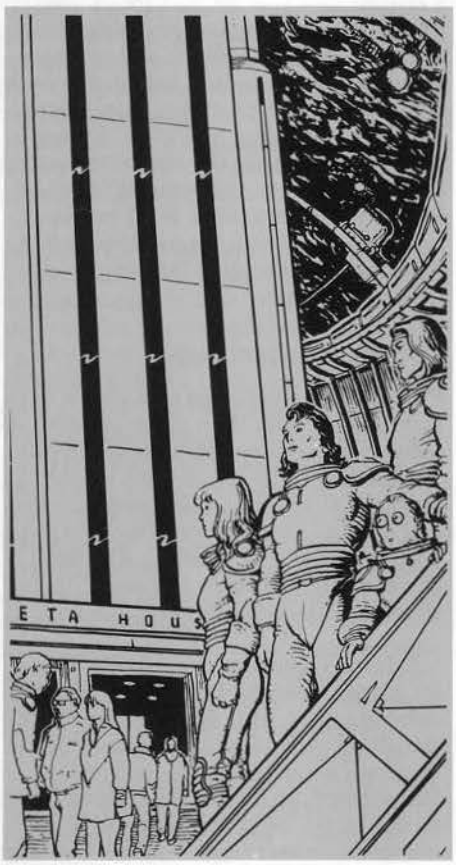
Urban Adventures

Cities in science fiction campaigns vary even more wildly than cities of Earth do today, but the kinds of adventures you can have in them might tend to look boringly alike unless you take care to add each city's particular flavor to the encounters in it. This column covered city-building in issues #53 and #70; see those articles for additional notes.

* *Startown Liberty* (for GDW's *Traveller* game); Gamelords, Ltd. (1984); by John Marshal. This 48-page booklet is a collection of random encounters found in urban areas near planetary starports. Encounters are divided into those found on the street (beggars, tourists, starship crewmen on leave, police, etc.), at places

of entertainment (tavern employees, con artists, games, pickpockets, etc.), and with criminals (undercover cops, rumormongers, contacts, fences, etc.). Many of these encounters can easily be developed into short, one-evening adventures or serve as introductions to long ones. Multiple consequences for many encounters are offered, one of which may be chosen by rolling on a table using a six-sided die; this option is very useful for spicing up events in all sorts of urban areas. Get this booklet if you can.

Sprawl Sites (for FASA's *Shadowrun* game); FASA Corporation (1990); by Boy F. Petersen Jr., John Faughnan, and Mike Stackpole. This is a superb guide to generating cyberpunk-style high-tech urban encounters, most of which can lead to short adventures as in *Startown Liberty.* The "Location Archetypes" section gives the typical floor plans of buildings such as banks, casinos, fire stations, docks, police stations, and residences; the Archetypes (generic character types) that are usually present in each place are noted as well. "Sprawl Encounters" has urban encounter tables for areas of different security ratings. Run-ins may be had with street-gang members, organized crime figures, runaways, snipers, cyclists, starlets, hit men, and corporate police. Note that fantasy non-humans can be encountered as well, but these may be altered to become aliens or members of human subcultures; magic-users can be encountered, too, but these may become oddball sorts of psionic or high-tech encounters, as appropriate. Typical urban NPC types and notes on law enforcement and IDs round out this volume. The statistical material specific to the *Shadowrun* game doesn't get in the way of this volume's utility. I strongly recommend it.



Night City Sourcebook (for R. Talsorian's *Cyberpunk 2020* game); R. Talsorian (1991); by Mike Pondsmith, Mike MacDonald, and other authors. This 184-page sourcebook details a 21st-century city in the Free State of Northern California. Along with the information it presents on the people, gangs, contacts, and neighborhoods of this dangerous urban jungle, it offers short tables of street encounters (usually dangerous ones) that can be developed into quick adventures, as can be done using some of the previously mentioned supplements. This sourcebook offers nicely done neighborhood maps in oblique-angle, three-dimensional layouts—very useful in getting the feel for what each area looks like. A colorful city map is also included. If you want adventuring ideas, you might just want to skim through this one and see if something suggests itself; the scenario-idea material here is far less meaty than in the *Sprawl Sites* book. On the other hand, as an urban setting, it's nicely done, and I wish I'd covered it in issue #70 (for ideas on city-making).

Solaris VII: The Game World boxed set (for FASA's *BattleTech* and *MechWarrior* games); FASA Corporation (1991); by Anthony Pryor and Mike Nystul. Here, too, I'm sorry I missed covering this product earlier, especially in issues #71-73 (giving ideas for on-planet adventures). Solaris VII is a world on which gladiatorial arena combat is practiced with huge BattleMechs, and even farmers from the boonies drive their vintage war machines into violent combat for the sake of the sport. Numerous encounters are detailed for MechWarriors who wander through the streets of Solaris City, and one might meet up with gang members, the police, criminals, nobles, space pilots, other MechWarriors, media crews, tourists, techs, and "wannabes" (groupies). It wouldn't take but a few minutes to convert most of these encounters into longer adventures, especially given the adventure hooks built into some of these meetings. This is worth several long looks for games in which *mecha* (those giant humanoid war machines from Japanese anime) can be found, but also for games in which other sorts of war machines can be substituted for *mecha.* For example, giant combat tanks, hovercraft, aircraft, or armed speedboats or cars could be used instead, and the encounters would still work just fine. Check this set out.

General Adventures

Finally, the following products have loads of adventure ideas and outlines adaptable to all sorts of campaigns, locations, and styles of play. I strongly recommend that you get most of these products for the variety they offer; you won't regret it.

* Supplement 6, *76 Patrons* (for GDW's *Traveller* game); GDW (1980); by Loren K. Wiseman, Tim Brown, Marc Miller, and John Harshman. This is a marvelous little 48-page booklet with a wide variety of adventure plots that can be adapted to virtually any science fiction role playing game. The 76 adventures themselves are divided into those for 2-6 players, 5-12 players, 9+ players, single players, and players running interstellar mercenary groups. Each adventure plotline is given a number of alternate endings that reveal what the *real* situation is—often being what the players least expect! It is also absurdly easy to modify each adventure idea or add new elements to it. On the down side, there are encounters in which the PCs are asked to perform antisocial missions of sabotage, terrorism, and hijacking (I can't imagine a terrorist group hiring tourists to perform their dirty work, anyway). If this doesn't fit the style of play in your campaign, you can still use these adventures but have the PCs work to undermine the terrorists' goals by working undercover and pretending to go along with things until they lower the boom on the bad guys; this is great if the PCs are actually secret agents or cops! Alternately, the acts of sabotage might be performed against legitimate enemy powers. If you can find this booklet, you've got a gold mine of material.

Hard Times (for GDW's *MegaTraveller* game); GDW (1991); by Charles E. Gannon. In the postwar era of the *MegaTraveller* universe, the Shattered Imperium is the scene of galaxy-wide catastrophe. Much of this book details the harsh conditions of this period, with limited applicability to other game systems. However, a dozen short adventures are offered in this 96-page book, each centered around a particular postwar theme: xenophobia, pirate activity, salvage operations, the saving of doomed populations on deteriorating worlds, etc. Despite the downbeat atmosphere of these adventures, they are well worth adapting to any interstellar game system.

* *Wanted: Adventurers* (for GDW's *Traveller* game); Gamelords, Ltd. (1984); by John Marshal. This 48-page booklet will be hard to find at best, but worth it. It has 20 short adventure outlines, each starting with a simple want ad published in a local planetary newspaper. The adventures are reasonably well detailed, covering about two pages each, and include missions in which adventurers can act as private bodyguards, corporate security guards, military instructors, hunters on safari, mercenaries, insurance investigators, starship repo men, search-and-rescue workers, and more. This is an impressive work and is worth getting for any interstellar role playing game; the missions are given with a minimum of game statistics, making them highly adaptable to other systems.

Space Atlas series (for SJG's *GURPS Space* system); SJG (1988 to date); by various authors. Each book in this series (there are four of them to date) presents at least two dozen world descriptions for the *GURPS Space* game, and each world offers at least one (usually 2-4) short ideas for adventures of every imaginable sort. Best of all, the material here is easily adapted to any other interstellar game on the market. With so much material to use, even simply for use in brainstorming new material for existing worlds in your campaign, these books are real treasures. The first three books are 64 pages long; the fourth is an impressive 128 pages. These are outstanding works and are highly recommended.

GURPS Space Adventures (for SJG's *GURPS Space* game); SJG (1991); by David L. Pulver, Thomas S. Gressman, William A. Barton, Jeff Koke, and Steve Jackson. Three long, detailed interstellar adventures are offered in this 128-page book, and all of them can be converted to any other interstellar game with a reasonable amount of work (game-specific material is present but kept in the background in favor of notes on plot, NPC characterization, and setting). The adventures include ones centered around espionage ("Rebirth"), military-defense ("Raid on Sterling"), and humorous ("Beware the Health Police") themes. All are of excellent quality and strongly recommended. Give yourself a week or two per adventure to read over it and make the appropriate changes for your own game.

Orion Rising (for TSR's TOP SECRET/S.I.™ game); TSR, Inc. (1988); by numerous authors. Much of this 128-page supplement (and the next one) deals with the details of a worldwide spy agency for an espionage role playing game. However, a great many short adventure outlines are given as well, most of them adaptable to science fiction games with a mild-to-reasonable amount of work. If the PCs are agents for an espionage or law-enforcement organization, acting either on one planet or across many, the value of this supplement is vastly increased. Missions run the gamut for the spy trade: counterterrorist action, agency defense against infiltration, assassination prevention, industrial espionage, sabotage prevention, criminal investigations, agent-rescue operations, and the like. All also require the usual amount of pencilwork to be playable, but many are clever and just different enough to be worth trying out on your group. The basic information that this book presents on a dozen cities across the world today is also of great value in developing similar urban centers on other worlds (see "Urban Adventures"). This is well recommended.

The Web (for TSR's TOP SECRET/S.I. game); TSR, Inc. (1990); by numerous authors. This 98-page book is less useful than the previous one, but it still offers a nice, if small, selection of detailed espionage-style adventures. The adventures are part of the "City Files" section of this book, which describes six cities (Amsterdam, Cairo, Jakarta, Hong Kong, Buenos Aires, and Chicago); each city has either one long adventure outline or several shorter ones related specifically to it. As with the previous supplement, this one is also of value to GMs wanting to develop cities on other planets, as well as offering an excellent criminal organization (the Web) that can mastermind many evil plots across one or more worlds in your campaign—a nice scapegoat to which many adventure hooks can be attached.

Summing up: If one day you need to jump-start the adventure-making part of your brain, it wouldn't hurt to clip the cables from your brain to one or more of these products. Some gentle mixing of other gaming genres (cyberpunk and espionage, in particular) with a straightforward interstellar campaign is also a good way to inject new vigor into the game and stir the players with excitement.

Interstellar Delivery

Time (at last) to see what's in the mailbag for "The Living Galaxy."

Readers have suggested more material be presented in this column that is applicable to specific games, such as *Star Wars: The RPG*, the STAR FRONTIERS game, and Palladium's *Rifts* system. I'd still rather offer more generic advice that many GMs could use, but I can certainly use specific games in my examples. Topics of interest mentioned by other writers include how to run special events such as fairs and games, anachronistic technology, stellar and planetary system design, alien races and starship design. My thanks go out to James P. Buchanan, Matthew Appleyard, Danny Baldwin, Douglas Lent, Christopher Butz, and Chas Jensen for their comments and support.

In future issues, I'm planning to work on articles covering low-tech "barbarian" planets (with notes on recycling old technology), handouts, aliens (dumb ones and smart ones), more technological treasures, basic adventure building, and a little trip to the library for some real-life ideas that might fit into your game campaign. (And there's a column on oddball ideas for unique player characters, submitted by you, the readers, in the works.) Next month, however, we meet the boogyman—aboard your own starship, in your cabin, right under your bed.

❑

Into the Dark

The Spirit of '75

James Lowder

For the 75th issue of this fine publication, I thought I'd dig up films from 1975. Shouldn't be a hassle, I thought foolishly. Then I scanned my movie encyclopedias and review guides for a list of candidates. Wow, was 1975 a sorry year for fantasy, SF, and horror films!

In the mid-seventies, the traditional horror and fantasy movie studios were mortally wounded by the release of *The Exorcist* (1973) and *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* (1974). Hammer Films' Gothic vampires and fantasy adventure heroes were simply no match for chainsaw-wielding Southerners and little girls who could spit pea soup.

And while a lot of producers jumped on the possession bandwagon, the excessive gore frightened many low-budget filmmakers away—after all, drive-ins were fast becoming a thing of the past. Without a ready-made market, money men couldn't be sure their epics about exorcism and Satan-worshiping Midwestern towns would ever get screen time. Some turned to television, others to the growing porn industry (which had no lack of theaters at the time).

For fantasy and SF, the picture was even more bleak. Disaster films were the rage, so anyone with special effects budgets were creating earthquakes (in Sensurround), not space ships. *The Six Million Dollar Man* was doing big things on television, ushering in a wave of made-for-TV superheroes. Ecological SF was hot—you know, isolated burgs getting devoured by worms or frogs or spiders as punishment for poor landfill practices. Equally as trendy were pseudo-documentaries about the paranormal—ESP, Bigfoot, the Bermuda Triangle, and the like. The masters of these brainless flicks, Sunn Classics, made a long string of films such as *Chariots of the Gods?* (1969) and *In Search of Historic Jesus* (1980).

A few gems managed to struggle out of the mire; 1975 saw the release of *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* and *Jaws*. Oddball entries like *The Devil's Rain*, with William Shatner *and* John Travolta, or *Deafula*, the vampire film that also boasts the honor of being the world's first feature done in sign language, also hit the big screen. Sadly, however, the typical release in 1975 was *Beyond the Door*.

You can't get any better *****
Entertaining and enjoyable ****
There are worse films ***
Wait for cable **
A waste of good tape *

Beyond the Door

1975, 97 Minutes
Film Ventures
Director: Oliver Hellman
Cast: Juliet Mills, Richard Johnson
1/2

After the cheery TV sitcom "Nanny and the Professor" was canceled in late 1971, Juliet Mills was reduced to garfing up black swill in this unfathomable dog. I guess she was trying to prove she could play parts that wouldn't be cloyingly sweet. She succeeded.

A guy goes over a cliff, and the devil offers him more time if he does some freelance work. Then mom-to-be Jessica Barret gets concerned when she learns her pregnancy is moving along at an astounding rate. She levitates in her sleep, suffers fits of psychotic rage, and talks in weird voices. Her husband finally figures out something strange is going on when he discovers a man following him around, who naturally turns out to be his wife's former lover, Dimitri (Richard Johnson). Of course his other two kids have been acting a little strange, too, but dad never catches on to the flying furniture and possessed toys.

Make a lot of sense? No? Then that's a pretty good summary of *Beyond the Door*, because the movie is baffling and really, really dull.

Beyond the Door blatantly stole much of its material from horror classics *Rosemary's Baby* (1968) and *The Exorcist,* but failed to make any kind of coherent plot out of the various swipes. We get an infernal pregnancy, a little kid who has an invisible friend from the underworld, lots of goo-spewing, and not much else. The filming is bad, the dubbing is bad (it was produced in Italy). The soundtrack backs up all the scary scenes with what has to be someone belching through a tuba. . . .

I ended up in the hospital for an emergency appendectomy within 12 hours of seeing this flick. The doctor wouldn't come right out and admit the cause, but I have my suspicions.

The Love Butcher

1975, 84 Minutes
Mirror
Director: Mikel Angel & Don Jones
Cast: Erik Stern, Kay Neer, Jeremiah Beecher
**

How can you miss with a title like this?

Crippled, dim-witted Caleb (Erik Stern) is a gardener. He seemingly works only for unpleasant suburbanite women who are just begging to be done in with whatever sharp or not-so-sharp instrument is available. But it isn't Caleb who murders the ladies who mistreat him, it's his "brother" Lester, the self-proclaimed macho sex god. Caleb takes on this suave alter-ego and smooth talks his way into the arms of the doomed women, then kills them in various gory ways.

The acting is stunningly terrible, the plot just ludicrous. The characters are all stereotypes—the gruff cop with the heart of gold, the nice cop who assists him, the crusading reporter. They are also as dense as high school guidance counselors for taking 80-plus minutes to figure out the murder. Let me see. We have a bunch of women killed with gardening tools within a few city blocks. All the women used the same gardener. Nope. Got me baffled. Even Steve McGarrett couldn't figure this one out.

Because of its technical and artistic incompetence, *The Love Butcher* remains mildly entertaining. The acting is so terrible, the story so unbelievable, you keep watching, just to find out what silliness will be foisted off on you next. And the silliness flies fast and furious. Caleb/Lester disguises himself as a door-to-door jazz record salesman to get into one house. Just before he attacks a woman, he shouts, "Your feminine pulchritude is detestable!" When he gets home from a hard day of gardening, Caleb/Lester obviously puts up his feet and reads the thesaurus—after sharpening his clippers, anyway.

Death Race 2000

1975, 80 Minutes
New World Pictures
Director: Paul Bartel
Cast: David Carradine, Simone Griffeth, Sylvester Stallone
*****1/2**

In the United Provinces of the 21st century, the most popular sport is the Annual Transcontinental Death Race, where drivers score points for killing pedestrians and making the best time from New York to the West Coast. Frankenstein (David Carradine) is the year's most beloved and successful racer, though he's had most of his limbs replaced after various bloody victories. His challengers are Calamity Jane Kelly, Nero "the Hero" Lonigan, Mathilda "the Hun" Morris, and Frankenstein's arch-rival, Machine Gun Joe Viterbo (Sylvester Stallone).

In the shadows lurk the Insurrectionists, intent on bringing the race to a halt and toppling the despotic president of the United Provinces. Who are these saboteurs, and how are they getting their information about the racers? The government evasively claims that the dratted French are behind the whole thing. After all, it's no coincidence that the word "sabotage" was invented by the French.

From the starting flag, this action-adventure film masquerading as SF is a lot of fun. It's fast paced and filled with irreverent humor. The Insurrectionists kill the racers with ploys worthy of Wile E. Coyote, including the old fake tunnel in front of a cliff gag. We are treated to such memorable lines as: "If they scatter, go for the baby and mother." In all, this is the closest thing to *Car Wars* I've ever seen on film—at least the way I learned to play it. (For real-life action, try the tunnel into Logan Airport in Boston at rush hour.)

David Carradine is great as Frankenstein, and it's a joy to see him beat up on Sylvester Stallone, whose character is "loved by thousands, hated by millions." Sort of like real life. Watch for future *Love Boat* purser and Congressman Fred Grandy as Herman the German, the Nazi navigator for Mathilda "the Hun" Morris. And some people say American politicians aren't qualified to do their jobs.

Jaws

1975, 124 Minutes
Universal
Director: Steven Spielberg
Cast: Roy Scheider, Robert Shaw, Richard Dreyfuss
****

The 28-year-old director of this film made tons of money for Universal, scared lots of people out of the water, and launched his career into the stratosphere. *Jaws* is arguably the best film Spielberg has made, and it is certainly much better than anything he's done in the past few years.

Based on the best-selling novel by Peter Benchley (who shows up as a reporter on the beach), *Jaws* is more an epic man-against-nature story than a horror film. Yet it is also expertly paced and really frightening in places. (I witnessed a friend leap backward over a row of theater seats when the severed head tumbled out of the wrecked boat's hull.)

The story is simple. A shark takes up residence off Amity Island (read as Martha's Vineyard) and devours a dog, a roast, and a few swimmers. To kill the shark, the sheriff (Roy Scheider) teams up with Hooper (Richard Dreyfuss), a shark expert, and Quint (Robert Shaw), the saltiest captain since Ahab. The film divides pretty neatly in half—the battle with city leaders to close the lucrative beaches, and the battle at sea against the shark. The first half is a little longer than it should be, but builds the characters nicely.

And the characters are what make *Jaws* so great. We care what happens to the three men who go out on the *Orca* to hunt the Great White because Spielberg and the screenwriters make them real. In fact many of the film's best moments center on the characters revealing something about their past—Hooper's reason for studying sharks, Quint's reason for refusing to wear a lifejacket. If you want a study in great dialogue and sparkling character interaction, watch the second half of this film.

The technical excellence that's become a Spielberg trademark is here too, especially in the clever uses of light and sound. The Oscar-winning John Williams soundtrack is definitely worth listening to on its own. Also a letterboxed laserdisc of *Jaws* recently became available. Don't miss it.

Trilogy of Terror

1975, 78 Minutes
MPI Home Video
Director: Dan Curtis
Cast: Karen Black
*****1/2**

As a producer, Dan Curtis teamed with screenwriter Richard Matheson on *The Night Stalker*, one of the best and most successful made-for-TV movies of all time. That telefilm, and its sequel, spawned a fun weekly series, which was running on ABC at the time *Trilogy of Terror* hit the small screen.

Each of the three tales star Karen Black. The first, "Julie," tells the story of a seemingly prudish college English teacher who gets asked out by a lustful student. He takes her to a drive-in (which is playing *The Night Stalker*) and drugs her. From there, he takes some compromising photos so she will keep up a relationship with him. In the end, though, he discovers she's not as prudish as she seemed.

The second tale, "Millicent and Therese," centers around some great acting by Black as both title characters—one a spinsterish woman, the other her sexy and destructive sister. When Therese goes too far, shattering a young neighbor's doll, Millicent decides to use voodoo to kill her. The twist ending, which is actually pretty obvious, provides a "shock" as the voodoo curse finds a surprising victim.

The first two stories are standard, well-produced yarns—though plodding and not really very shocking—but the third in the trilogy is great chiller. "Amelia" revolves around a nice young woman, alone in her new apartment. There she waits for her beau, admiring the unique birthday present she found for him in a curio shop: a Zuni fetish doll. The truly hideous wooden doll supposedly contains the imprisoned soul of a Zuni hunter, who will escape if the gold chain falls from its waist. You can guess what happens.

What follows is a terrifying battle as the monstrous, seemingly indestructible doll charges after Amelia. The sound of the berserk little Zuni running across the carpet and its cries will stay with you for days after this one, kiddies. On its own, this episode would rate four and a half stars and certainly merits a rental. Next time you're tempted to watch *Child's Play*, check this out instead.

❑

Of Lamps And Logic

A Brainteaser From The Land Of Fate

by Rob Nicholls

It was nearly a decade ago that Captain Calvin Longbottle, from the city of Ravens Bluff, was swept into the Land of Fate by a fierce sea storm. He and his crew were marooned upon a strange island.

The island was very dangerous, being populated by a giant snake that no mortal could harm. Each day at dusk, the snake would attack and eat one of Longbottle's sailors. The captain and his crew bravely fought the serpent each time it appeared, but they could lay no wound upon it.

All appeared lost.

However, the gen of a powerful shi'ar passed by the isle and saw the sailors. Impressed by the courage of Longbottle and his men, the little genie told his master of the sailors' plight. Traveling to the island, the shi'ar presented himself to Longbottle.

"Most noble captain, Fate indeed smiles upon you. I am versed in the dealings of genie-kind and indeed have several at my disposal. Allow me to set their lamps before you. As you can see, there are five, and each of their lamps is wrought of a different metal. Now let me tell you about these servants, my friend. It is very easy to tell them apart, as each not only has a different name, but each wears a turban of a different color. When I divide treasure among them, each prefers a different type of gemstone. And when they share my table, each prefers a different food. Now, of all my genies, Calvin Longbottle, he who eats dates has agreed to grant you a *wish*. With such a gift, a wise and clever captain such as yourself could easily escape this wretched isle. All you must do is select the lamp he resides within. But before you make your choice, allow my gen to tell you more. . . ."

1. The genie in the middle lamp eats figs.
2. Karim lives in the lamp of electrum.
3. The genie who likes diamonds is next to the one who wears a white turban.
4. Ahmad likes to dine upon eggs.
5. Diyab lives in the lamp next to the one of gold.
6. The platinum lamp is just to the right of the silver one.
7. The one who likes diamonds lives in the copper lamp.
8. Diyab lives in the first lamp.
9. The genie who likes emeralds also likes olives.
10. Nabil wears a blue turban.
11. The one who likes sapphires sits beside the genie of the red turban.
12. Yezeed, who wears a black turban, likes rubies.
13. The genie who likes pearls wears a green turban.
14. The genie who eats raisins resides in the lamp of platinum.

Longbottle chose the correct lamp. Can you?

The answer appears on page 30.

Blade Golem

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by Nicholas Impey

CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	Any
FREQUENCY:	Very Rare
ORGANIZATION:	Solitary
ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Any
DIET:	None
INTELLIGENCE:	Low
TREASURE:	Nil
ALIGNMENT:	Neutral
NO. APPEARING:	1
ARMOR CLASS:	0
MOVEMENT:	12
HIT DICE:	11 (66 hit points)
THAC0:	9
NO. OF ATTACKS:	2
DAMAGE/ATTACK:	2d10/2d10
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	See below
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	See below
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	Nil
SIZE:	L (8′ tall)
MORAL:	Fearless (20)
XP VALUE:	6,000

The blade golem is an artificial being animated by the infusion of an elemental spirit. No magical manuals to ease the construction of such a golem are known to exist. Unlike most other magically animated creatures, this golem is not only used as a guard, but as a relentless assassin—one that will tirelessly track down and kill its master's enemies.

Blade golems are humanoid in form, appearing to be men made of thousands of highly-polished steel triangles with razor sharp edges and jagged points. Though the golem's head has the expected contours, it has no distinct ears or mouth.

Unlike other golems, this variety is sentient. It possesses a predatory cunning, is single-minded and cannot be bargained with.

Combat: A blade golem makes no noise. This inhuman silence gives opponents a −3 to their surprise rolls. And because the blade golem's senses are so acute, it gets a +3 bonus to avoid being surprised.

When in combat, the golem lashes out with its swordlike hands in an attempt to cut its target to ribbons. Anyone foolish enough to attack the golem with bare hands, or worse, to grapple it, automatically suffers 1d12 points of damage per contact from the creature's razor skin.

The blade golem's most feared assault is its "whirling death" attack. Once a day the golem can expel a portion of its outer skin, an attack which looks like a miniature cyclone of steel blades. Anyone within 10 feet of the golem suffers 4-40 points of damage, save vs. paralyzation for half damage.

Only weapons enchanted to +2 or better can harm a blade golem. Further, these golems are immune to all spells or psionic attacks that affect the mind or life force. For example, spells such as *sleep, slay living, suggestion, confusion, charm monster* and others that affect creatures' minds, are ignored. Spells based on cold, ice, lightning or electricity are also ineffective. Attacks based on fire, acid and heat, including *heat metal*, cause half damage. Spells that have power over metal, such as *crystalbrittle,* have full effects. A *wall of iron* cast on the golem cures it of all damage.

Blade golems have infravision to 120′ and are excellent trackers, as if they had a score of 18 in that proficiency. In addition, if a golem draws blood from an opponent, the golem will be able to automatically track that opponent for the next 2d6 days.

Habitat/Society: The blade golem is an automaton, artificially created and under the control of its creator. Since this construct is treated as a greater golem, there is no risk of the creator losing control.

Ecology: Blade golems are not natural creatures, and therefore play no part in the ecology of a world. The golems do not sleep and do not have the ability to ingest food or liquids.

The creation of a blade golem is a lengthy process, requiring a wizard of at least 18th level. The wizard must begin with a lump of the finest quality steel, weighing at least a ton. The steel is melted down in a forge—along with a *sword of dancing*. The wizard casts *polymorph any object, wish,* and *geas* on the liquid metal, which is cast into the statue of a man. Finally, the wizard casts *shatter* on the golem, which gives the creature its distinctive jagged appearance and brings the thing to life.

GMed) in the same fashion. That's enough praise for the moment; I wouldn't want to swell your heads with an endless tirade of exaltations.

In the last issue of the Newszine an interesting point was made concerning GM prizes. I believe that the issue was effectively "put to rest" in the Editorial response, but it did bring to life another topic that has been troubling me as of late. Players' scores for the GM are open to scrutinization by everyone except fellow players. This is a fact witnessed by myself and others who have attended several conventions in the New England area.

To achieve a completely honest appraisal of the GM's performance, a degree of anonymity must be achieved. In many instances I have witnessed the GM going through his own evaluations or being told by another official, whose job it is to tally these scores, what a specific person's (name and all) response was to his GMing. Although feedback is a necessary and integral component of improving one's abilities as a GM, the "critics" (after all, that is what a player becomes when the game ends and the scoring begins) should not themselves be persecuted for their opinions.

I personally have no qualms with any RPGA Network sanctioned event and GM, but in many instances I found myself deliberating what I would do if I was placed in that unfortunate circumstance. Now maybe I am not giving enough credit to the GM's ability to overcome this bruising to their egos, but nonetheless, I feel that certain measures must be taken to improve the veracity of the GM's score.

My recommendations for allowing a greater degree of anonymity in the voting are simple. Instead of being given one sheet to vote on the players and the GM alike, each player is given separate sheets. The one with the player scores and evaluations are given directly to the GM for him to total and determine those who finished first through third. The other sheets are all given to a player, designated at the start of play, who will then place them in an envelope, seal it, and personally deliver it to another RPGA Network member whose job it is to tally these scores. Each GM score sheet will be devoid of any player's names, and the envelope will bear no particular markings, other than the GM's name and Network number, to identify the voting group. Then possibly a summary of the scoring for the entire convention could be given to the GM, along with comments (both negative and positive) made by his/her players, to perpetuate the feedback system and allow the GM avenues for improvement.

I believe that the implementation of the above recommendations would greatly increase the sincerity of the GM's scores and thus be an overall improvement for all those concerned from the GMs to their players.

John Bentas
Manchester, NH

You bring up some interesting points, John. We agree that sometimes players feel uncomfortable about criticizing the DMs, knowing that those DMs will be reading the comments. On the other hand, some players want the DMs to read those comments so that the DMs can improve. At conventions as large as the GEN CON® Game Fair, DMs must check the players' score sheets to make sure they are filled out properly—otherwise the players won't get credit for the tournament. And you might be surprised, John, just how many players DMs catch at not putting their names on the score sheets! Adding a second set of sheets for judge comments (that is sealed so the judge doesn't see it) might work at smaller conventions, but the mass of paperwork would quickly overwhelm people at large conventions.

We'd like to hear more feedback on our voting system. You know that we make changes based on members' requests. For example, we've changed our scoring sheets effective this Game Fair so that you cannot vote for yourself. A great many members requested this change. We listen, and we'd like to know what you think.

I received issue #70 of the Newszine along with issue #69. Here are my comments on the two issues:

The Living City. I enjoy your articles on the Living City, and I've inserted some of the shops into my own campaign, with some modifications, as I run a D&D® game campaign. I notice that the RPGA™ Network is to get an area to develop in Gamma World as well. As a D&D game player I think it is a pity that the RPGA Network does not have an area on Mystara to develop, either on the outer world, or in the HOLLOW WORLD® campaign.

The Well of Dreams by Daniel Day. A good idea, and well thought out. However, I cannot imagine my group using it more than once, especially if some of them suffer detrimental effects.

The well is likely to be condemned by Lawful temples as being a creation of Chaos, and they would sponsor attempts to destroy the well. Chaotic temples would perhaps try to protect the well.

In issue #70 I like Lawrence Hurley's suggestion, and I would certainly contribute to such a column. It would certainly be interesting to read varying reviews of the same product, especially if one is very complimentary, and the other is very critical.

I like Elminster's pipe; it is different. As the only reader of the POLYHEDRON® Newszine in my group, I enjoy seeing new magical items introduced in your pages. If I introduce a new item from DRAGON® Magazine, I find that many of the players have read about it.

Roger Smith
Lincoln, United Kingdom

Thanks for your comments, Roger. We base the Newszine's content on what our readers want. You'll be seeing more about our piece of the GAMMA WORLD® game in the next issue. We're excited about it. You mention wanting a piece of the D&D game world to develop. Unfortunately, we do not get enough D&D game submissions to warrant a project like that. However, we'd love to receive D&D game submissions, Roger (hint, hint).

❑

Lamps And Logic Answers

	Name	Metal	Turban	Gem	Food
Lamp 1	Diyab	Copper	Red	Diamonds	Dates
Lamp 2	Ahmad	Gold	White	Sapphires	Eggs
Lamp 3	Karim	Electrum	Green	Pearls	Figs
Lamp 4	Nabil	Silver	Blue	Emeralds	Olives
Lamp 5	Yezeed	Platinum	Black	Rubies	Raisin

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AND COMPANY

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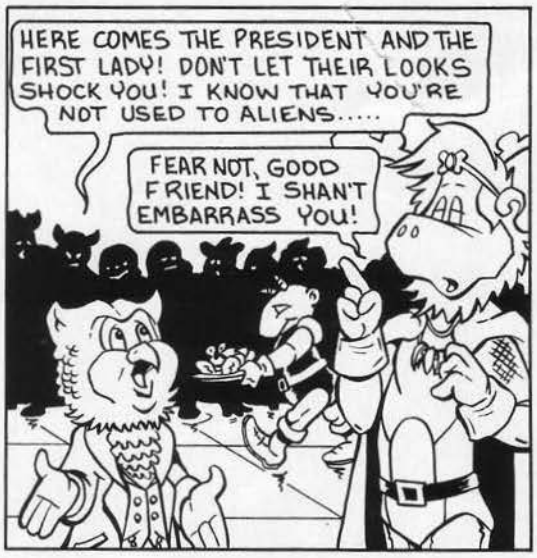
I THOUGHT IT BEST AS TONIGHT WE DINE WITH THE UNIVERSAL INTERGALACTIC FEDERATION PRESIDENT AND THE FIRST LADY!
AMAZING! YOU'RE A QUICK LEARNER!
YES... QUITE SO....


HERE COMES THE PRESIDENT AND THE FIRST LADY! DON'T LET THEIR LOOKS SHOCK YOU! I KNOW THAT YOU'RE NOT USED TO ALIENS.....
FEAR NOT, GOOD FRIEND! I SHAN'T EMBARRASS YOU!

Chapter the Second

Let it be known, Blackacre's greatest defender has been banished from his beloved domain into a world of chaos. In a dungeon he awaits his fate . . .

—Excerpted from The Blackacre Enchiridion

O, HIGH POWERS... BLACKACRE DISAPPEARS I DO NOT UNDERSTAND...

...IN OTHER WORDS, LEX, YOU'RE **NOT** IN BLACKACRE'S JURISDICTION ANYMORE. SOMEHOW YOU'VE BEEN TRANSPORTED TO **THIS** DIMENSION, WHICH IS VERY INTOLERANT OF SWASHBUCKLING KNIGHTS ON HORSEBACK. WE'RE GOING TO REPRESENT YOU IN COURT BECAUSE OUR FIRM HAS EXPERIENCE WITH INTER-DIMENSIONAL REGULATIONS AND STATUTES...

THE HIGH POWERS HAVE IGNORED MY PRAYERS. I HAVE NO RECOURSE BUT TO TRUST YOU, THOUGH I LIKE IT NOT.

HEY, THAT'S NOT THE FIRST TIME A **LAWYER'S** HEARD THAT...

WOLFF & BYRD

COUNSELORS OF THE MACABRE

WHEN IS THE TRIAL?

FIRST WE'VE GOT THE ARRAIGNMENT HEARING TO DEAL WITH...

BUT I **MUST** PREPARE FOR THE TRIAL! WILL IT BE BY SWORDS, LANCE OR HAND TO HAND COMBAT?

DEADLIER THAN ANY OF THOSE, LEX — **PAPER!**

LOOK, LEX, LET **US** DO THE FIGHTING. IF YOU THOUGHT YOUR WORLD WAS BARBARIC WAIT'LL YOU GET IN THAT COURTROOM...

TO LET ONE SO SLIGHT AND FAIR WAGE BATTLE ON MY BEHALF PAINS ME INDEED, BUT IF THIS IS THE WAY OF YOUR WORLD, SO BE IT.

yeah, well...

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Lex is mistaken in thinking the High Powers have forsaken him. Nay, they are ever concerned . . .

—Another Excerpt from The Blackacre Enchiridion

PUFF PUFF THEY WON'T BELIEVE THIS... THEY WON'T BELIEVE THIS... PUFF PUFF

WHY CAN'T LEX BREAK OUT OF THE DUNGEON?

THE SOURCEBOOK SAYS HIS STRENGTH IS REDUCED ONCE HE LEAVES BLACKACRE

OKAY, SO WHO ARE THE TWO WHO HAVE COME TO HIS AID?

I DUNNO... THE ENCHIRIDION IS PRETTY VAGUE... THEY LIVE IN THE WORLD LEX IS TRAPPED IN...

DAVEY! TONY! SANDY! CLARENCE! LOOK LOOK LOOK

HEY!

KEEP IT DOWN, JOHNNY, MY MOM'LL HAVE A FIT!

CHECK IT OUT!

HORSEBACK HELLION HEARING TO BE HELD

HOLLEE... IT'S LEX!

IT CAN'T BE! LOOK WHAT HE SAYS ABOUT BLACKACRE THAT'S **OUR** GAME!!

WE'VE GOT TO CALL THE **OTHERS!**

THEN WHAT?

-THEN WE TAKE THE LAW INTO OUR OWN HANDS!

NEXT: GAME PLAN